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Communist Aggression of the House of Representatives

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Edited and compiled by
PHILIP A. HROBAK

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SLOVAKIA is published periodically by the Slovak League of America, a cultural and civic federation of Americans of Slovak descent.

The chief purpose of SLOVAKIA is to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the Slovak nation and its long struggle for freedom and independence.

As Americans, members of the Slovak League of America firmly believe that the Slovak nation, just as all nations, has an inherent and God-given right to freedom and independence. They are dedicated to the cause of the American way of life, Slovak freedom and world peace, and are determined to oppose the plague of Communism and all other totalitarian political systems.

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Box 150
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CORRECTION — In the previous issue of SLOVAKIA several mistakes were made inadvertently in the article written by Dr. George W. Cesarich, "The Apostles of Bogus Federalism." Please make the following corrections: pg. 68, first three lines should read: "the sufferings of subjugated nations in the artificial states which the Croats and the Slovaks definitely and finally **refuse to** accept as their own", instead of "...definitely and finally **do accept** as their own;" pg. 69, par 3, line 4, to read "is not true that these states have **ever** corresponded to," instead of "**never** corresponded to;" pg. 73, par. 2, line 2, "**unconceivable**" should read "**inconceivable**." We regret the errors in printing and hope to avoid them in the future.

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SLOVAKIA

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HOW THE COMMUNISTS SEIZED SLOVAKIA

is told on the following pages by witnesses called upon to testify by the Select Committee on Communist Aggression of the House of Representatives, headed by the Hon. Charles J. Kersten of Milwaukee, Wis.

Michael Galayda is an American citizen who experienced Communist terror in Slovakia. He was there and saw Communism at work among his people who had persistently and consistently fought the Red plague for over a hundred years. He makes his home in Hazleton, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. Smrekovský, American citizens, also witnessed the terror and horror of Red rule in Slovakia first hand. They have relatives and many friends in Slovakia and, hence are using an assumed name.

Dr. Joseph Paučo, newspaperman and writer, came to America in 1950; he is assistant editor of the *JEDNOTA* (Union), the official organ of the First Catholic Slovak Union, and also chairman of the U. S. Branch of the Slovak National Council Abroad.

Dr. Joseph Mikula studied law and politics and was very active in student circles of Slovakia before he fled the Red terror which invaded his native Slovakia.

Dr. Joseph Mikuš, former Slovak diplomat, lawyer and writer, became the director of the Press Bureau of the Slovak League of America, Washington, D. C., soon after his arrival in America several years ago.

Ján Dobrotka, now an exile in West Germany, was a Sergeant of the Department of National Security in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Jur Detviansky was an active officer of the Slovak Army before he fled to the West.

Rev. Anton Botek, S.T.D., editor and former director of the Catholic Center in Bratislava, Slovakia, is in charge of the Slovak Catholic Action in Exile; he edits "*HLASY Z RÍMA*," (Voices From Rome), Italy.

Rev. Stephen Náhalka, S.T.D., ecclesiastical writer and former personal secretary to Bishop John Vojtaššák of the Spiš Diocese, Slovakia — who, by the way, was sentenced to 24 years in prison by the Reds — lives in Rome, Italy.

Philip A. Hrobák, editor of the *JEDNOTA* since 1938 and president of the Slovak League of America since 1950, is a native American, born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1904. Active in Slovak affairs for the past 35 years, Mr. Hrobák has devoted much time to the study of Czecho-Slovakia and Slovakia and the people responsible for government. His articles and pamphlets in English have contributed greatly to expose "Czechoslovak" pseudo-democracy, the machinations of the Beneš Czechs (Socialists) and Lettrich "democrats", the people responsible for the betrayal of the Slovaks to the men of the Kremlin — and the Reds and Socialists active in Slovak circles in America.

Communist Aggression Against Slovakia

(The Select Committee on Communist Aggression, House of Representatives, Eighty-Third Congress, 1954, under the chairmanship of the Honorable Charles J. Kersten, did quite a remarkable job to ascertain how the Communists seized power in the various countries of Europe. I believe it is the first time in our history that an honest attempt was made to understand the background of the peoples behind the Iron Curtain. Slovak representatives were among those who gave testimony of Communist aggression in Slovakia, which differed in some respects from that in other countries. From the testimony of various witnesses who were heard and the many others who sent in their statements from various countries, it is quite evident that Slovakia fell an easy prey to Moscow and the Communists because of the pro-Soviet policy of Dr. Edward Beneš and the Czech Socialists, who ruled in Czecho-Slovakia with the Communists after World War II. Slovakia, traditionally anti-Communist, was in fact sold out by the National Front Government of Prague. The vast masses of the Slovak population had no choice; their will meant nothing to Beneš and the Prague regime, which took over Slovakia with the help of Soviet bayonets, disregarding the political will of the people completely. Excerpts from the testimony of Slovak witnesses, which are contained on these pages, definitely prove that. — P. A. H.).

FROM THE SPECIAL REPORT NO. 8

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia is situated between the Carpathian Mountains on the north and the Danube and the Tisa Rivers on the south. The inhabitants are known as Slovaks and with the Poles and the Czechs, belong to the group of western Slavs.

The political history of the Slovaks goes back to the beginning of the ninth century when Christian civilization was introduced into their territory, and it was during this period that the ruler, Rastislav, 846—870, made himself known by an intensive Christianization of the country. Following his invitation, two brothers, Saints Cyril and Methodius, who henceforth were to become the apostles of the Slavs, came in 863 from Byzantium to Great Moravia. By their activities, they laid the foundations for church organizations, the Slav liturgy, alphabet, and literature. It was in this way that the work of the two missionaries

from Byzantium brought the western Slavs into the fold of the Catholic Church, an historical event of paramount political and cultural importance.

In the tenth century, Slovakia became for a time a battlefield in the struggles among the Slavs, Magyars, and Germans, and at the beginning of the eleventh century, she became a part of the kingdom of Hungary, organized under the Arpad dynasty.

In the fifteenth and at the beginning of the sixteenth century the internal problems of Hungary reached a certain degree of consolidation. The invasions of central Europe by the Turks in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, reduced Hungary to the area of the Slovakia of today and political and cultural life was concentrated in that area. For a long time sessions of the Hungarian Parliament were held and coronations of the Hungarian Kings were celebrated in Bratislava.

The end of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries mark the beginning of the Slovak national renaissance. At this time, the nationalities in central Europe were about to abandon Latin as the literary and spoken language of the cultivated class and to replace it by their own national language. Consequently, a spiritual rebirth stirred up national aspirations among the different peoples of the Hapsburg monarchy.

In 1848, the Slovaks organized a military uprising against the centralism of Budapest and helped the Emperor crush the Kossuth rebellion against the Hapsburgs. They did it with the hope that Slovakia would be finally acknowledged as an autonomous land within a federated monarchy, but their hopes in this respect were never satisfied.

In the "Memorandum of the Slovak Nation" of June 7, 1861, a Slovak National Assembly, asked the Parliament of Hungary to create an administrative unit from the counties inhabited by the Slovak population under the name of "Slovak region." It was to be provided with such a degree of political and cultural autonomy which would be compatible with the principle of unity of the monarchy. But the Hungarian Parliament failed to act.

In 1868 the Nationality Act was passed in the Parliament of Hungary by which Magyar was proclaimed the official language of the state administration in the kingdom, except for some autonomous bodies.

In 1895, the Serbs, the Rumanians from Transylvania and the Slovaks convoked a congress of nationalities in Budapest in which they claimed respect for their national rights and asked once more for a federative reform of the kingdom on the principle of equality. Such a reform was not carried out. As a consequence the non-Magyar nationalities lost, during the First World War, their interest in the continued existence of the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary.

World War I and Formation of the Czecho-Slovak State

During World War I the spirit of nationalism was greatly stimulated within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This spirit was reflected by increasing demands for greater autonomy or outright independence for the different nations within that empire. The advocacy of the principle of national self-determination by President Wilson further stimulated these aspirations and did much to set the stage for the peace settlements.

During the course of the war Czech political leaders established a secret committee which directed the activities of Czech nationalists at home and abroad. Thomas G. Masaryk, as the leader of this movement, toured Europe and the United States where he received encouragement and support.

Meanwhile a movement arose among the large number of Americans of Slovak descent promoting Slovakia's separation from Hungary. Three different solutions of the Slovak problem were envisaged: Slovakia as a new state, as a partner of a Czecho-Slovak Federation or as a territory forming a political union with the prospective Polish Republic.

Finally, the Slovak League of America entered into contact with the Americans of Czech descent and signed with their organizations, in 1915, the Cleveland agreement, and in 1918 the Pittsburgh Pact, both of which aimed at

the creation of a Czecho-Slovak federal state. In these documents the Slovak organization stipulated that Slovakia should be an equal member with the Czech lands and have complete legislative, executive, judiciary and cultural autonomy in strictly national matters, while matters of common interest, such as foreign affairs and defense, should be within the competence of a common parliament.

A tangible proof of the aspirations of the Czech and Slovak peoples toward full independence was demonstrated by the thousands of their soldiers who had surrendered on the various fronts. They formed the Czecho-Slovak Legions in Russia, France, and Italy and fought on the side of the Allied and Associated Powers.

In order to convince Western statesmen that the concept of national states was in concern with the will of the people a Congress of Peoples Oppressed by the Hapsburg Monarchy was commenced in April 1918 at Rome. This congress did much to influence the thinking in western Europe and in the United States. In the summer of 1918, France, Great Britain, the United States, and Italy officially recognized the Czecho-Slovak National Council as a defacto government and the Czecho-Slovak forces as an Allied army waging regular warfare against Austria-Hungary and Germany.

A Czecho-Slovak Provisional Government was set up in Paris with Masaryk as President and was recognized de jure by the Allied and Associated Powers. It issued the Declaration of Czecho-Slovak Independence on October 18, 1918, in Paris. On the same day President Wilson rejected the Austrian proposal for the organization of Austria-Hungary on a federal basis by replying that he could no longer accept "mere autonomy of these peoples as a basis of peace . . ."

On October 28, 1918, the Czecho-Slovak National Council in Prague proclaimed the deposition of the Austrian Emperor as sovereign of the Czech and Slovak lands and the establishment of a free and united Republic of Czecho-Slovakia. The Slovak National Council, a revolutionary body composed of Slovak patriots, convened on October 30, 1918,

and published a document known as the Declaration of Turciánsky Sv. Martin. In this document they proclaimed the separation of Slovakia from the Kingdom of Hungary and their intention to form with the Czech lands a Czecho-Slovak state. On November 14, 1918, this decision was ratified by the Czecho-Slovak National Assembly which elected T. G. Masaryk as President of the Republic and set up the first cabinet.

However, it was not long before serious disagreement developed between the Czechs and Slovaks on the form of government for the new state. The Czechs favored a Czecho-Slovak centralist state while the Slovaks insisted upon a Czecho-Slovak federation in which the identity and individuality of each nation would be recognized and preserved. In the opinion of Slovak leaders the Czecho-Slovak state, for all practical purposes, was to become a Czech state, enlarged by Slovakia and Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia. This situation resulted in the Slovaks taking a firm position against the centralist form of government. Monsignor Andrew Hlinka, a great patriotic leader from the time of pre-war Hungary, went clandestinely in September 1919 to Paris in order to present Slovakia's cause before the Peace Conference, advocating an international guaranty for the self-government of the Slovak nation within Czecho-Slovakia. Denounced to the French authorities by the Czecho-Slovak delegation as a Hapsburg spy, he was forced to return to Slovakia without any result. Imprisoned by order of Prague at Mirov, Moravia, Hlinka was to stay there until April 1920, when he was elected deputy of the Slovak People's Party, founded by him under the Hungarian regime and reestablished in December 1918.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Constitutional Structure

Although the basic constitution was not adopted until February 1920, its general principles had been applied from the very beginning of Czecho-Slovak independence. The philosophy underlying this fundamental law is expressed in the preamble, which is strikingly similar to the

preamble of the Constitution of the United States.

The main body of the Constitution provided for a popularly elected Parliament, a President selected by both houses of Parliament and an independent judiciary.

Parties and Politics

The politics of the period may be divided into four phases:

1. Nationalistic phase (1918—19)

Following the proclamation of independence, all Czech political parties agreed on the fundamental principles on which the new state was to be built. Having reached this major consensus and the necessary legislation having been enacted, the coalition had accomplished its task and a split on partisan lines followed.

2. Swing toward Social Democracy (1919—20)

The period of Socialist rule in the Czecho-Slovak Republic did not accomplish too many changes in the country's economy although the railways, mines, and water power were socialized. The division of the Socialists into Socialist and Communist ranks ended the brief era of Socialist experimentation in Czecho-Slovakia.

3. The agrarian era (1922—35)

This was a period of relative parliamentary stability under the leadership of the Agrarian Party, which managed the government along middle-of-the-road policies. A satisfactory coalition government was maintained throughout this period.

4. The crisis (1935—38)

This period was the touchstone of the solidity of the Czecho-Slovak state. Confronted with the serious problem of the Sudeten German population, Czecho-Slovakia betrayed no signs of political panic.

The principal political parties in Czecho-Slovakia in the period between the two World Wars formed the following groups:

National Democrats. — This party, conservative and intensely nationalist, drew its principal support from businessmen, the professions, and higher civil servants. It never became very powerful.

Populists. — Under the name of the Czech Populist Party and the Slovak Populist Party, respectively, this group endeavored to bring Catholic ideas into public life. The small farmers and workers in rural districts were its strongholds, especially in Slovakia.

Agrarians. — This political group, the largest in the subsequent parliaments, was solidly entrenched in both rural and town districts by means of a widespread network of cooperative, economic, and cultural organizations. Its broad economic and social program attracted wide support.

National Socialists. — This non-Marxian Socialist Party may be described as a "radical national party of the lower middle class and of the workers." It had rather more influence than its moderate numerical strength would indicate.

Social Democrats. — This party, resembling the social democratic parties of other European countries, had more influence during the first two years of the Republic. Though outwardly united it was, however, undermined by dissension within its own ranks, which finally resulted in the expulsion of the Communist faction.

Communists. — The Czecho-Slovak Communist Party was created in 1920 as a result of the expulsion of Communist elements from the Social Democratic Party. Though equally subversive and aggressive as elsewhere in Europe, the Czecho-Slovak Communists never secured a large following during the two decades before the Second World War.

Economic, Social and Cultural Development

Agrarian reform

Redistribution of land was an urgent problem facing the new government and a Land Reform Act, therefore, was one of the first measures passed by the Czecho-Slovak Parliament. This act entitled the state to take over, after compensation, all land from the great estates in excess of a fixed maximum and to permit land purchase by those who needed it most. The agrarian reform program substantially improved the material conditions of the rural popula-

tion and averted the danger of agrarian disturbances.

Economic development

While Czecho-Slovak agricultural resources almost covered domestic requirements, industrial production was far in excess of the needs of the home market since Czecho-Slovakia had been the industrial center of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Since the Danubian countries, originally Czecho-Slovakia's principal foreign market for manufactured goods, were increasing the tempo of their industrialization with a view to restricting the import of industrial products, Czecho-Slovak foreign trade was obliged to look for new outlets. These were found mainly in those western and overseas countries which were Czecho-Slovakia's principal suppliers of raw materials, especially the United States and Great Britain.

Economically and financially Czecho-Slovakia was a sound state in central Europe. As an exporting country it was severely hit by the world economic depression of the early thirties, but, by timely adjustments to new price and exchange levels, it was one of the first European countries to weather the crisis.

Education and social progress

The cultural level of the Czechs was high and their passion for education was proverbial in central Europe. The new Republic fostered education by establishing additional free schools and by improving the existing schools.

The Czecho-Slovak State also forged ahead in the field of social improvement. All groups and interests possessed the right of organization and thus organized labor had its trade unions, farmers their cooperative societies, and white-collar workers and businessmen their associations. Health and other types of social insurance were either provided for or encouraged by the State and provision was made for State assistance to housing and cooperatives.

The Religious Situation

The religious situation created after the establishment of the Republic in 1918 must, like many other of the coun-

try's developments, be viewed against its historical background.

A strong Czech group of modernist, nationalistic Roman clergy insisted on radical reforms, such as the use of the vernacular in the liturgy and the abolition of compulsory celibacy, which the Roman Curia could not accept. As a result, this group seceded from Rome and established an independent "Czecho-Slovak Church" which originally numbered about one million adherents but which lost half its membership by 1939, so that Roman Catholics still comprised 80 per cent of the population. In spite of adverse circumstances, the Roman Catholic Church adjusted itself, therefore, to the new milieu and recovered much for its former influence.

In the political and cultural life of the new Republic, the Protestant element played a role far beyond its numerical strength. Many prominent political leaders, Thomas G. Masaryk among them, belonged to the Protestant faith.

Internal Problems

The Constitution of 1920, in large measure disregarding the ethnographic realities of Czecho-Slovakia, was to become a bone of contention between the Czechs on the one side, and the Slovaks, Germans, Magyars, and Ruthenians on the other. The Slovaks demanded the incorporation of the main clauses of the Pittsburgh Pact into the Constitution. The Ruthenians, whose autonomy within Czecho-Slovakia had been granted by the Treaty of St. Germain, asked that this international obligation be respected by the Prague Government. The Germans and the Magyars solicited cultural rights and administrative autonomy on the local level, as granted by the same Treaty of St. Germain. This psychological split among the population of Czecho-Slovakia weakened considerably the new state from both the internal and international point of view. The Czech statesmen tried to remedy this situation by creating a system of international treaties such as the Little Entente, 1920, the Pact of Alliance and Friendship with France, 1924, and a similar pact with the Soviet Union, 1935. Like the Austro-Hungarian statesmen in 1867, Benes believed

that the transformation of Czecho-Slovakia into a federation of three members, the Czech lands, Slovakia, and Subcarpathian Ruthenia, would weaken the international position of the centralized state, particularly with reference to Hungary and Germany. Consequently, in the field of internal administration he developed a system, in which all branches of Government in Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia were reserved primarily to the Czechs.

Politically, all problems of these two lands were to be decided in the Prague Parliament, where Slovakia had only 58 and Ruthenia 9 deputies out of 300. Thus, even the most important questions such as the relation between state and church, official language, system of schools, the economy, were to be decided by the Czech parliamentary majority.

As to the cultural aspect, secondary schools in Slovakia as well as the Bratislava University became an official domain of Czech professors, teaching the unitarian concept of a "Czechoslovak" nation in the ethnic sense. On October 1, 1938, there were 523 Czech and 345 Slovak instructors teaching in the secondary schools of Slovakia. At the same time, there were 56 Czech and only 24 Slovak professors in the Bratislava University.

From the standpoint of the economy Slovakia was to remain a predominantly agrarian land, while the Czech part of the Republic was highly industrialized. This policy of two different measures is shown by the share of Slovakia and Ruthenia in the industrial production of the Republic. The participation of these two lands in the whole industry, between 1934 and 1937, was only 8.5 per cent, while 91.5 per cent went to the Czech lands. The proper importance of these figures is stressed by the fact, that Slovakia constituted 23 per cent and Ruthenia 5.5 per cent of the total population of the Republic.

From the administrative point of view, the district and county offices in Slovakia and Ruthenia were mostly directed by Czech officials who were directly responsible to Prague as were the police. In 1938 there were 120,926 Czech public officials in Slovakia.

All these aspects created in Czecho-Slovakia what has

been known as the "Slovak problem." The Slovak People's Party which, in 1925 had 23 deputies, became not only the strongest single party in Slovakia, but a majority party of the Slovak people (not counting minorities and the Communists) endorsed the federative reform of the Republic asking for the accomplishment of stipulations contained in the Pittsburgh Pact. As early as January 25, 1922, this party presented its first project for constitutional reform in Czecho-Slovakia. The program had the following main points:

Slovakia to be granted her own Diet and Government. As common affairs would be considered: The President, the Army, Foreign Affairs, and Communications. The Slovak Diet to have exclusive competence in such matters as national education, denominations, justice, commerce, agriculture, public works, social welfare, and corresponding finances. The executive power in Slovakia, as regards both the laws which would be voted by the Central Parliament in Prague and those which would be enacted by the Diet of Bratislava, would belong to the Slovak Government. Laws voted by the Central Parliament would be without validity in Slovakia if rejected by a two-thirds majority in the Slovak Diet. This proposal would have satisfied Slovak aspirations, but it was never put on the agenda of Parliament.

A second proposed reform concerning the decentralization of the state administration was presented to the Czecho-Slovak Parliament by the Slovak People's Party, May 8, 1930. More modest in its scope than the first one, this document claimed for Slovakia the same constitutional position which had been granted but never carried out by article 3 of the constitution relating to Subcarpathian Ruthenia. According to this proposal, Slovakia should have had her own Diet as a national legislative body and a governor as chief of the land executive.

The Diet would have been competent to enact laws concerning language, education, religion, municipal, and district administration and justice as well as other matters which the laws of the Central Parliament would confer upon it. Laws enacted by the Diet of Slovakia and signed by the

President of the Republic would be promulgated, under signature of the governor, in a special collection of laws for Slovakia. Although presented in due form, this proposal was never discussed in the Parliament.

October 16, 1932, the Slovak People's Party of Andrew Hlinka and the Slovak National Party of M. Razus (a small traditionalist Protestant party) having joined in an agreement about the necessity of autonomy for Slovakia, stressed their determination to pursue the fight for Slovakia's national rights, "even though it may bring the disintegration of the Czecho-Slovak Republic."

Following the resignation of T. G. Masaryk as President of the Republic, E. Benes became a candidate in December 1935 for that office. After some consultations, the Slovak People's Party endorsed his election, stipulating, however, that a policy of national equality between the Czechs and the Slovaks should be inaugurated by the President and a law concerning Slovakia's autonomy be promulgated in one year. Nevertheless, it was two years later before the Prague Government was ready to consider the Slovak problem and this occurred in connection with the Sudeto-German claims for national rights within the Republic.

This nationality group had been integrated into Czecho-Slovakia in spite of their protest. Since the very formation of Czecho-Slovakia, the German minority had been soliciting a form of cultural autonomy in the schools, local administration, and in the courts. Later on they asked for a better economic and social policy in the German areas suffering from unemployment. For a long time, Prague did not listen to such voices. But with Hitler's accession in Germany, the Sudeto-Germans received the backing of the Third Reich. Consequently their claims increased at the same time as their courage. In 1935 the Sudeto-German Party, with 44 deputies, became the second greatest party in the Republic. The Prague Government, not willing to appear as acting under foreign pressure remained reluctant. The stiffer the Czecho-Slovak Government became, the more Hitler determined to annihilate Czecho-Slovakia.

Parallel to this evolution was Slovakia's struggle for its own rights. June 5, 1938, a third project concerning the federalization of the Republic was published by the Slovak People's Party, and presented to the Central Government. It was only one week before the Munich Conference, September 22, 1938, that E. Benes sent a counterproject to the Praesidium of the Slovak People's Party.

Shortly after, the conflict between Prague and the Sudeto-Germans was resolved in Munich, where, on the basis of Lord Runciman's recommendation, the Sudetenland went to Germany.

This decision created for Slovakia a new situation. As a consequence of a policy in which she had practically no share, Slovakia was also to surrender in favor of Hungary her Southern boundary zone, settled mostly by Magyar population. This was a psychological blow which brought an agreement among all Slovak political parties, except for the Communist, Social-Democrat and minority parties, about Slovakia's autonomy. Thus on October 6, 1938, one day after the resignation of E. Benes, six political parties of Slovakia, representing 35 out of 58 deputies, published a declaration in which they agreed that the third project of constitutional reform should be immediately put in practice and an autonomous government for Slovakia be appointed under the chairmanship of Dr. Joseph Tiso.

November 2, 1938, by the arbitration of Ciano and Von Ribbentrop in Vienna, 10,309 square kilometers with 853,670 inhabitants were to be ceded by Slovakia to Hungary. This included 503,980 Magyars and 272,145 Slovaks. Slovakia saw that she was becoming a victim of an international political game without any fault of her own. The Vienna decision proved the futility of the former party divisions and produced an integrating effect upon the Slovak political spectrum. Parties which had signed the Declaration of Zilina on October 6, agreed on November 10, 1938, on the formation of a common party known henceforth as the Party of National Unity.

This political evolution in Slovakia was finally sanctioned by the Czech and Slovak representatives in the

Prague Parliament on November 19, 1938. Then, by a constitutional amendment, Czecho-Slovakia became a federation of Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia and Carpathian Ukraine (Ruthenia). But the relations between Prague and the Slovak Government remained tense, because of 9,000 Czech officials who were removed by the Slovak Government, and the share of Slovakia in the income and expense of the common budget.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Before Munich

The principal aim of Czecho-Slovakia's foreign policy was the preservation of the status quo as established by the 1919 peace settlements, and the establishment of friendly relations with all her neighbors through an extensive system of adequate agreements. Eduard Benes, Minister of Foreign Affairs until 1935 and later President of the Republic, was the guiding spirit of this policy.

A solid foundation for the preservation of the status quo in central Europe was laid by the creation of the Little Entente formed by Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania, and three victorious Danubian states bordering on vanquished Austria and Hungary.

Czecho-Slovakia was an enthusiastic supporter of the League of Nations and collaborated wholeheartedly in the negotiations which brought Germany and the Soviet Union into the League.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Czecho-Slovakia's foreign relations entered into a critical phase and two years of virulent Nazi propaganda among the Sudeten Germans bore fruit in the results of the 1935 elections. The Nazi-sponsored Sudetendeutsche Partei polled over 62 per cent of the total German vote and cowed the smaller German parties into submission.

Later on, acting on instructions from Berlin, the leaders of the Sudeten German movement put forward demands which no Czecho-Slovak government could accept and, with the annexation of Austria, the stage was set for final action.

Desperately anxious to avert a new war, France and

Great Britain proposed to Czecho-Slovakia that she should cede to Germany all areas with a German majority. When Czecho-Slovakia demurred, she was informed that she must accept the proposal or bear the consequences alone. The result was that the Czechs gave in and at Munich their country was divided on the lines dictated by Hitler.

After Munich

After Munich, Czecho-Slovakia tried to adjust itself to the new situation. President Benes resigned and left the country. He was succeeded by Emil Hacha, an elderly and experienced jurist with no political affiliations, who believed that close cooperation with the Third Reich was the country's only hope of survival.

The transition to Hitler's New Order was swift. Obnoxious parties were dissolved and the Government was given wide powers to govern by decree. The administration was purged, the press put under rigorous control and anti-Semitic measures were enacted.

The situation in central Europe after Munich became even more confused. Germany began to remind the Bohemian public of the role the Kingdom of Bohemia had played within the Holy Roman Empire. Hungary started to speak about her historical boundaries and the necessity of a common frontier with Poland. According to the Nuremberg documents, Hitler at that time had already decided to destroy Czecho-Slovakia. But there was apparently no definite decision on Slovakia as to whether to place it under German occupation or to have it occupied by Hungary. In this situation, the Slovak Government had only one preoccupation: to preserve what unity had remained of Slovakia after the Vienna arbitration and to avoid, as far as possible, direct domination by any of her neighbors.

On March 10, 1939, the Prague Government dismissed the government of Dr. Joseph Tiso and proclaimed martial law in Slovakia. The Slovak people considered this a violation of agreements that had been signed between Prague and Bratislava and incorporated into the Constitution. Public demonstrations spread throughout Slovakia.

Invited to a consultation by Hitler in Berlin, Dr. Joseph

Tiso, the dismissed chairman of the Slovak Government was shown a telegram by Von Ribbentrop, according to which Hungary was ready to occupy Slovakia. Hitler then suggested that this eventuality may be prevented by the declaration of Slovakia's independence. Consequently, Dr. Tiso returned to Bratislava where, on March 14, 1939, following his report, the Slovak Diet proclaimed independence.

President Hacha was then summoned to Berlin and presented with an ultimatum aiming at the imposition of a protectorate upon Bohemia-Moravia. Forced into submission, the President signed a declaration by which he "placed the destiny of the Czech people and country with confidence in the hands of the Fuehrer of the German Reich." German troops marched into Bohemia and from Prague (March 16) Hitler issued the proclamation establishing the "Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia."

Thereafter, Hungary annexed Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia. Czecho-Slovakia was dead.

The Establishment of the Slovak Republic

Even though the Slovak state was largely the result of a tense international situation, it nevertheless corresponded to the aspirations of the Slovak people for freedom and the principle of self-determination and self-government. After Munich, central Europe became a part of the German orbit. Therefore, in order to discourage Hungary in her armed attack launched against Eastern Slovakia, the Slovak Government concluded with Germany a treaty of protection, March 23, 1939, by which the Reich assured the existence of Slovakia without destroying its national personality. In exchange, Slovakia had to follow the German line in foreign policy.

Altogether, 27 states recognized the international individuality of Slovakia. Besides the countries which were later to become members of the Axis, Slovakia was recognized by the Holy See, the Soviet Union, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Great Britain (*de facto*), France (*de facto*), Liberia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador.

According to the constitution voted on July 21, 1939,

Slovakia became a Republic with a Parliament of 80 members and a Government of nine.

The constitution contained principles, which in some aspects combined features of the liberal state, the Christian democracy, and the authoritarian state. In the beginning all power of the Slovak Republic was vested in the Parliament but later on, in 1941, after Slovakia had entered the war against the Soviet Union, the executive was to prevail over the legislature.

The number of political parties was reduced. The Communist and the Social Democrat parties, representing only ten deputies, had been suppressed as subversive, in October 1938. Six other parties merged into the Slovak Unity Party, the backbone of the political system of the Slovak state, and there were two minority parties: German and Magyar.

The Slovak state was far from being a perfect democracy in the traditional sense. It reflected a compromise between the past and the present, between an old tradition and a temporarily determined political dynamism in Central Europe. But, in general, it was an expression of the self-preservation instinct of the Slovak nation.

The Slovak Government, in 1941, joined Germany, with two armored divisions, in the war against the Soviet Union. Although on December 12, 1941, the Slovak Press Bureau had published an announcement that the Slovak Republic was in a state of war with the United States and Great Britain, neither the President nor the Slovak Parliament or Government ever made such a decision or declaration. In fact, the Slovak forces during the Second World War, did not engage in combat against any of the Western Powers.

World War II and the Restoration of Czecho-Slovakia

Czechs in the protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia were not directly involved in the Second World War. They were exempt from military service but had to work for the German war machine. Though their contribution in the fight for freedom was not spectacular, thousands of Czech patriots paid with their lives for their efforts to keep the flame of freedom flickering.

After Munich, many Czechs and Slovaks left the coun-

try and established themselves abroad, mostly in Paris and London, which became the centers of their political activities.

Headed by Eduard Benes, these emigres set up a National Committee to take up the struggle for the restoration of a free Czecho-Slovakia.

The committee was recognized first as the provisional and eventually as the regular Government of Czecho-Slovakia, by Great Britain and, later, by the United States and the Soviet Union. Czecho-Slovakia was thus given the status of an allied state under foreign occupation. The Munich agreement was declared null and void and Czecho-Slovakia's original frontiers were guaranteed.

While the Czecho-Slovak Government-in-exile was primarily concerned with the consolidation of the international position of the Republic, the Czecho-Slovak Communist leaders in Moscow were completing their plan for immediately seizing power after the liberation. Moscow knew precisely what Czecho-Slovakia's international position would be once the Red army was stationed within the territory and was concerned only with tactical movements aimed at bringing about a speedy sovietization of the country.

Toward the end of 1943, E. Benes went to Moscow where, on December 12, 1943, he signed with Stalin a treaty of alliance, friendship, and mutual help between the Soviet Union and Czecho-Slovakia. By this treaty, the Soviet Union was to approach Czecho-Slovakia after the end of the war as an ally.

No such treaty having been concluded with the Western Powers, the influence of Moscow on the future of emergent Czecho-Slovakia became predominant. In Soviet tactics, this treaty was to create a favorable atmosphere in Bohemia-Moravia for the idea of a Soviet liberation.

During his visit in Moscow, E. Benes came to an agreement with K. Gottwald, the exiled chief of the Czech Communist Party, about the main principles upon which the edifice of the future Czecho-Slovakia would rely: (1) The state administration would be replaced by "national committees" (Soviets); (2) the former right-of-center parties would be eliminated; (3) the non-Communist parties in re-

stored Czecho-Slovakia would form with the Communists a "government of National Front"; (4) "people's courts" would be established to eliminate all war criminals. These principles with an extensive interpretation and application of points (2) and (4) and the nationalization of industry were to lay the foundations for a "People's Democracy" in Czecho-Slovakia.

In Slovakia, the treaty of friendship, mutual help, and collaboration with the Soviet Union produced a stimulating effect upon the Communist and Social Democrat undergrounds and also on a group of liberals whose imagination, with respect to central Europe, was tempted more by the absent Soviet Union than by the present Germany.

These groups met secretly on Christmas 1943 in Bratislava and signed what is known as the "Christmas agreement." In this declaration they reaffirmed their will to work for the restoration of "Czecho-Slovakia," for a narrow collaboration with the Soviet Union in the field of foreign policy, for the establishment of political justice and for the continuation of resistance against the Germans and the Slovak Government.

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL GALAYDA, AMERICAN CITIZEN FROM HAZLETON, PA.

Mr. McTigue. The Russians deported to Russia the teachers and well-educated people?

Mr. Galayda. Yes, teachers and educated people.

Mr. McTigue. And you were in Slovakia while this was going on; is that correct?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Now, while these deportations were going on did you then endeavor to get a visa out of the country?

Mr. Galayda. I tried a couple of times but it was impossible at that time. I was put in jail two times.

Mr. McTigue. Who put you in jail?

Mr. Galayda. The Czecho-Slovak Army. They asked me to fight against the Germans. I refused. I said, "I am an American citizen and I refuse to serve in the Czecho-Slovak Army."

Mr. McTigue. So, you were put in jail because you refused to serve? Mr. Galayda. Yes, that's right.

Mr. McTigue. Now, when was the second time you were put in jail?

Mr. Galayda. Well, the second time was in 1946.

Mr. McTigue. By the Communists?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Why?

Mr. Galayda. Well, because I was campaigning against communism.

Mr. McTigue. You were making talks against communism?

Mr. Galayda. Yes, I made a couple speeches in the villages against communism. That is why I was jailed.

Mr. McTigue. Now, in 1945, at the end of the war, did you try to get a United States passport?

Mr. Galayda. Yes, I did.

Mr. McTigue. To return to the United States?

Mr. Galayda. Yes. In 1945, when the war was over, me and my brothers decided to leave, because at that time the United States was still fighting with the Japanese. So we decided to leave and join the American Army.

Mr. McTigue. Decided to come home?

Mr. Galayda. Yes. We went to the American consul in Prague. He refused. He said, "You have to get your passport first, then you can join American Army." So I came home.

Mr. McTigue. How did you go about getting your passport?

Mr. Galayda. Well, we went to Hungary. On the way from Budapest to Bratislava — well, I will tell you something about the Russian soldiers, what they did.

Mr. McTigue. Yes, I wish you would. This is while you are taking the train to Bratislava?

Mr. Galayda. Yes. I never am going to forget that time what happened.

Mr. McTigue. You are on the train now?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Is this what you are describing?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And you are en route to Prague by way of Budapest and Bratislava?

Mr. Galayda. The Russians pulled the emergency brake. They had guns; they took the money from the people, and in every coach was one soldier. He had a gun. They robbed the people. They take everything. Then I heard some screaming, a girl, a couple of girls started screaming. I know that. I remember that. And I don't know what happened because I didn't see because in every coach was one soldier and we can't move.

Mr. McTigue. And they took the girls off the train?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. How long did they hold the train up?

Mr. Galayda. Oh, It was, I think, at least one hour.

Mr. Bonin. One hour.

Mr. McTigue. And everybody on the train was relieved of his valuables, jewelry, money?

Mr. Galayda. They took everything.

Mr. McTigue. Now, what happened when you finally reached Prague?

Mr. Galayda. Well, when I reached the Prague, like I said, I went to the American consul. I told him I wanted to join the American Army. He said, "No. You have to get your American passport first." So then I came home.

Mr. McTigue. You came home to Slovakia?

Mr. Galayda. Yes. I came back home. Then I start speaking against communism.

Mr. McTigue. You started writing against communism; you made some speeches against communism?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Is that correct?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Now, did anybody make any complaint about their activities, taking this property away from them?

Mr. Galayda. No, at that time it was impossible to say something.

Mr. Bonin. You had nobody to turn to to even make a complaint?

Mr. Galayda. No.

Mr. Bonin. If you did make a complaint you would probably be arrested?

Mr. Galayda. Then you are sent to Russia.

Mr. Bonin. In other words, there was a constant fear in the minds of the people that they would go to a concentration camp?

Mr. Galayda. Yes, that's right.

Mr. Bonin. Into Siberia?

Mr. Galayda. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Which, of course, is nothing to pleasant to anybody living behind the Iron Curtain?

Mr. Galayda. No, I don't think so.

Mr. Bonin. You were very happy to get out of there?

Mr. Galayda. Yes. The Communist Party is no good for this world; absolutely no good. Because I was over there and I have experience: I lived in Czecho-Slovakia for 20 years, and I know. They are no good in this world.

Mr. Bonin. They are no good for this world. Well, do you have any message to tell to the people of the United States who may feel that communism is a good system of government?

Mr. Galayda. Well, there is one thing I can say, and that is the American people should be proud of what they have, freedom of speech and everything. They should be proud of what they have.

Mr. Bonin. Is there any freedom of religion under the Communists?

Mr. Galayda. No.

Mr. Bonin. Is there any freedom of the press?

Mr. Galayda. No.

Mr. Bonin. Is there any freedom of assembly?

Mr. Galayda. No.

Mr. Bonin. Is there any freedom to use radio and television as we do in America here?

Mr. Galayda. No.

Mr. Bonin. It is a pretty black picture, this living behind the Iron Curtain; isn't it?

Mr. Galayda. That's right.

(Wilkes-Barre, Pa., September 30, 1954).

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF MR. SMREKOVSKY

Mr. McTigue. You came to this country in 1928; is that correct?

Mr. Smrekovsky. 1928 is correct.

Mr. McTigue. And did you become an American citizen at that time?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes, sir, after being five years in this country.

Mr. McTigue. I understand that you returned to Slovakia in 1939; is that correct?

Mr. Smrekovsky. 1939; yes.

Mr. McTigue. What was the purpose for returning to Slovakia at that time?

Mr. Smrekovsky. To visit my father because he was reaching 90 and wrote me that he was ill; so I wanted to visit him and see him.

Mr. McTigue. Now, did you return to Slovakia before the outbreak of war between Germany and Poland?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes. We had a little difficulty crossing the Polish border, but that didn't amount to much.

Mr. McTigue. Now, at that time, conditions were good in Slovakia; is that correct?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes, they were.

Mr. McTigue. There wasn't any difficulty as far as . . .

Mr. Smrekovsky. We didn't know anything about war then.

Mr. McTigue. There was complete freedom of the press . . .

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Freedom of religion . . .

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And freedom of assembly . . .

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. How long did you stay in Slovakia?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Seven years.

Mr. McTigue. Then you were there at the time the Russians came into Slovakia?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes, I was.

Mr. McTigue. What — or, when did you first come in contact with the Communists?

Mr. Smrekovsky. After the German Army was defeated, they started to drop parachutists to organize Communist bands to persecute and rob middle class and decent people.

Mr. McTigue. Now, did this happen in 1944?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And this is the Communist-inspired uprising that you are talking about.

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And in the community where you were living they had parachuted agents into the community to organize Communist bands in order to continue the uprising?

Mr. Smrekovsky. That's right.

Mr. McTigue. And bring it to a successful conclusion, if necessary?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes, and spread communism at the same time.

Mr. McTigue. Now, can you tell us some of the things you witnessed, yourself, during the course of this Communist-inspired uprising?

Mr. Smrekovsky. I remember a family captured by the Communists. There were five members in the family, a two-year-old girl, there was another bigger girl, a son-in-law, an old man, and his wife. They were dragged to the edge of the forest and shot from the back. Then they dug a hole for them and buried them.

Mr. Bonin. Mr. Counsel, I just want to interrupt here. We heard testimony before from different witnesses — when stating that they were shot in the back, do you mean that the . . .

Mr. Smrekovsky. They start to run.

Mr. Bonin. They started to run?

Mr. Smrekovsky. They started to run and they shot them from the back.

Mr. Bonin. And they shot them from the back while they were trying to get away from them?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Now, they were agents of the Russian Government — that were doing that?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Exactly.

Mr. Bonin. And were they armed, these people that were shot, or were they without arms?

Mr. Smrekovsky. They were without arms.

Mr. Bonin. They were without arms?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Without arms, innocent people.

Mr. Bonin. But, nevertheless, they were all shot in the back, the one two years of age, four years of age, the two larger ones, the son-in-law, and the father?

Mr. Smrekovsky. And the mother, too. Five persons.

Mr. Bonin. Five persons? Now, you say that they were tossed in a mass grave; is that correct?

Mr. Smrekovsky. That's right.

Mr. Bonin. They were all placed in the same grave?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Was there any religious burial service involved?

Mr. Smrekovsky. No, sir. No, sir. They just buried them there like any criminals. It happened around October, and during the winter they dug them out and put them in the cemetery, in the corner of the cemetery, where they are still buried.

Mr. Bonin. Continue Mr. Counsel.

Mr. McTigue. Now, after the Communists had occupied Slovakia, did there come a time when you were put in jail yourself?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes. I was there 14 days.

Mr. McTigue. Why?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Of course, they had no reason. They wanted to get rid of the middle-class people. My brother-in-law and a friend of mine were arrested. Finally, my wife went to the authorities and they let me free after 14 days.

Mr. McTigue. What happened to your brother-in-law?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Well, he was jailed also, but they released him.

Mr. McTigue. But there were others whom they didn't release?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. You know that of your own personal knowledge?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. They were friends of yours?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Leading people in the community?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Priests?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Nuns?

Mr. Smrekovsky. That's right.

Mr. McTigue. And people of different religious faiths?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Now, when did you and how did you get back to the United States?

Mr. Smrekovsky. As soon as the American consul came to Prague, I applied for a visa to the United States, and as soon as my transportation was ready I left and came to the United States, first of October 1946. I left my wife there for three years until I could bring her over.

Mr. McTigue. Now, at the time you left you owned some property; didn't you? Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. What happened to that property after you left?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Well, that was all confiscated. My wife had to sign a statement that it's given to the Government. And everybody who wants to come to America had to do that. Otherwise she would't get a visa.

The Chairman. That is a method of highway robbery that they hold against somebody that wants to migrate from one country to another?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes, sir.

Mr. Bonin. They compel them to transfer their property to the Government.

(Wilkes-Barre, Pa., September 30, 1954).

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF MRS. SMREKOVSKY

Mr. McTigue. When your husband left Slovakia in 1946 to come to the United States, he left you in Slovakia; is that correct. Mrs. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And at the time he left you in 1946 you had under your care the property which you both owned; is that correct? Mrs. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Now, when your husband left and you had the property under your management, what experience did you have with the Communists?

Mrs. Smrekovsky. Very bad.

Mr. McTigue. Did they make efforts to frighten you in any way so that you would give your property to them?

Mrs. Smrekovsky. That was the only hope to come to this country, unless I agreed that the property is transferred to the Government.

Mr. McTigue. So until you signed over your property to

the Government you had no chance of leaving Slovakia; is that correct? Mrs. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. In the meantime, while you were still there, in 1946 and before you left the country, were your friends mistreated by the Communists? Were any of your close friends that you have personal knowledge of mistreated in any way by the Communists?

Mrs. Smrekovsky. In my hometown there were shot or massacred four people while I was with my parents — there was a senator, a notary public, a mayor, and a forester. During the night, in their night clothes, they loaded them up in one truck and took them away.

Mr. McTigue. What was their crime? Why were they shot?

Mrs. Smrekovsky. Because they were not Communists and they never agreed with the Communists.

Mr. Bonin. Congressman Feighan. Just a minute. In other words, even though the Communists have been in Slovakia since 1945 . . . Mrs. Smrekovsky. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Still your relatives and friends have not become Communists? Mrs. Smrekovsky. Right.

Mr. Bonin. They still believe in the religion and the freedom of religion that they had before?.

Mrs. Smrekovsky. And they hope they will be freed and live again like decent people.

Mr. Bonin. In other words, regardless of how long the Communists may dominate Slovakia, there is still that desire for freedom on their part and to live as they used to prior to the Communist regime that has been imposed upon them? Mrs. Smrekovsky. Yes, sir.

Mr. Bonin. Now, I understand that these four influential people, a senator, a mayor, a timber man and a notary public, were also shot because they failed to accept communism and to lead the people through Communist doctrines and principles under the domination of the Russian system?

Mrs. Smrekovsky. Right.

Mr. Bonin. That is the type of freedom that is being sold to the people behind the Iron Curtain?

Mrs. Smrekovsky. Yes, sir.

Mr. Bonin. Force, threats, violence, and intimidation, in order to constantly keep them in fear of what is apt to happen to them? Mrs. Smrekovsky. Exactly.

Mr. Bonin. Now, your wife came out of Czecho-Slovakia in 1949; is that correct? Mr. Smrekovsky. Yes, sir.

Mr. Bonin. And the principal reason why you are testifying under an assumed name is because you are fearful of what might happen to your relatives and the friends that you still have in Slovakia?

Mr. Smrekovsky. Exactly.

(Wilkes-Barre, Pa., September 30, 1954).

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH PAUČO

Mr. McTigue. Mr. Paučo, where are you living at the present time? — Dr. Paučo. In Middletown, Pa.

Mr. McTigue. How are you employed?

Dr. Paučo. I am assistant editor of the Slovak weekly, Jednota.

Mr. McTigue. Mr. Paučo, I understand that you were born in Slovakia, is that correct.

Dr. Paučo. Yes; that is true.

Mr. McTigue. What part of Slovakia?

Dr. Paučo. In central Slovakia.

Mr. McTigue. Central Slovakia. And it's my understanding that you spent most of your adult life as a journalist; is that correct?

Dr. Paučo. Yes; that is correct, sir.

Mr. McTigue. While you were in Slovakia, it is also my understanding that in your capacity as a journalist, you had the occasion to witness the Communist-inspired uprising in 1944; is that correct?

Dr. Paučo. Yes, that's true.

Mr. McTigue. And were you also present at the uncovering of the mass graves at Vinnitsia in the Ukraine?

Dr. Paučo. Yes; that's right.

Mr. McTigue. How did you happen to be there?

Dr. Paučo. I was a member of a journalist expedition in July 1943. It was an expedition of all journalists from central Europe. I came to Vinnitsia in July 1943 and I was there four days. In those four days I saw five or six mass graves of the Ukrainian people and some Polish people, who were

murdered by the Soviets. An explanation was given to us by the German doctors that these people were shot between 1939 and 1941.

I spoke with the local people, Ukrainian and Polish people, some dozens of these people, because we were allowed to speak to those people — at the mass graves there in Vinnitsia, in the town of Vinnitsia. For example, I was shaved twice in a local barbershop, and I spoke to these men and with some other people in Vinnitsia. A concert was given in the town of Vinnitsia in honor of the journalists' expedition, and after this concert, I spoke with several men and women, and all these Ukrainian people talked to me. They said what I saw there in mass graves is true, and that their relatives were shot by the Soviets between 1939 and 1941, after the occupation of west Ukraine in 1939. Some people of Ukrainian nationality known as strong anti-Communists were deported in the night. And later, at the beginning of the war between Soviet Russia and Germany, deportation was in great masses. Nobody was sure that his relatives, husbands, sons, or some other of the family, will not be shot in the night. I have in my memory six or seven cases of the wives and daughters of the shot fathers and brothers, who told me their relatives were deported in the night. The people knew nothing. Their husbands and fathers were sent to Siberia or probably shot.

Mr. McTigue. How many people were killed . . .

Dr. Paučo. Several hundred.

Mr. McTigue. At Vinnitsia?

Dr. Paučo. Several hundred. I was at the graves four days and I spoke with several dozens of Ukrainian women, and, I learned, several hundred were buried in these mass graves.

Mr. McTigue. In these mass graves that you knew about?

Dr. Paučo. Yes; in Vinnitsia.

Mr. McTigue. Yes. But there were other mass graves discovered later on; is that correct?

Dr. Paučo. I heard about it. I know about Katyn, but I wasn't there. I was in Vinnitsia and I can state only what I saw at these mass graves. I have here a statement of what

I saw at these mass graves.

Mr. McTigue. May I suggest, Mr. Chairman, since we have other testimony that we want to develop, and since we have other witnesses, that we admit this statement into the record, but not have it read at this time?

Dr. Paučo. All right.

Mr. McTigue. Make it a part of the record.

Mr. Bonin. Would you have any objection if we make this statement a part of the record at this time and you give us the highlights of it as of this moment?

Dr. Paučo. All right.

Mr. Bonin. Without objection, we will take the statement and place it in the committee files.

Mr. McTigue. You may recall, Mr. Chairman, that we had testimony at our hearings in Munich on the Vinnitsia murders very much along the same lines Mr. Paučo is testifying. This testimony that he has given today on the subject of the Vinnitsia massacre certainly corroborates what we heard from many witnesses in Munich. You also recall in connection with that testimony that one of the witnesses described the finding of hundreds of bodies of Vinnitsia victims under the floor of a dance hall in one of the amusement parks when these mass graves were investigated. I am sure you recall that testimony.

Mr. Bonin. Yes. I distinctly recall that, and this corroborates the fact that these mass graves and the mass killing of citizens of Vinnitsia was deliberate and perpetrated entirely by the Communist regime in Russia.

Now, I understand, Mr. Paučo, that you have some additional testimony supplementing what happened in Vinnitsia and what took place in Slovakia; is that correct?

Dr. Paučo. Yes. I would like to say that the same thing that happened in Vinnitsia in 1939—41 happened in Slovakia in 1944. The Soviets' school of partisans were parachuted in the spring of 1944 in the mountains of Slovakia, and then in August 1944 they organized a so-called uprising against the Slovak Government and shot hundreds and thousands of Slovaks of anti-Communist feeling. In Slovakia, we had at this time, 1944, several mass graves of innocent Slovak citi-

zens, Slovak anti-Communist patriots. The Communist partisans were parachuted, as I mentioned, by the Soviets, and the partisans were also furnished Soviet ammunition. This so-called uprising in Slovakia started with preparations in 1943. Some so-called underground politicians made an agreement with the Communist leader, Karol Schmidke. And this Karol Schmidke said in 1946 that this action in 1943, this preparation of the uprising, was the merit of the illegal Communist Party. All the people who declined to collaborate with the Communist leaders in 1944 were shot. This happened in central Slovakia because central Slovakia is a mountainous land. Then the German armies came to Slovakia and Slovak territory was a battlefield. After this Communist uprising in Slovakia, I heard from my friends, from my relatives in Slovakia that many innocent people, farmers, workers, priests, some priests, some congressmen, were shot by the Communists. I recall a congressman, a Catholic priest Anthony Salat. He was of very strong feeling against the Communists. He wrote several books against communism and, in the first week of the uprising, he was shot. In Slovakia were liquidated about forty to fifty thousand Slovaks in this Communist putsch.

Mr. McTigue. They were shot?

Dr. Paučo. They were shot by the Soviets, by the Soviets' partisans and by the collaborators in Slovakia.

Mr. McTigue. About 50,000?

Dr. Paučo. Yes, about 50,000.

Mr. McTigue. In the period of one year?

Dr. Paučo. In the period of three months.

Mr. McTigue. Three months?

Dr. Paučo. The putsch was defeated in two months, but after there were some battles in the mountains in Slovakia, and in December the Red Army came to Slovakia. Several thousand Slovaks from eastern Slovakia were sent by the NKVD to Russia, to Siberia and concentration camps and to the mines in Dombas.

Mr. McTigue. Now, when and how did the uprising finally end?

Dr. Paučo. The German Army came into Slovakia in September 1944.

Mr. McTigue. Now, you had a close relationship with Monsignor Tiso; isn't that correct?

Dr. Paučo. That's true.

Mr. McTigue. Now, will you tell the committee who Monsignor Tiso is and briefly explain your relationship with him and your discussion with him after the putsch?

Dr. Paučo. I was editor-in-chief of the greatest daily in Slovakia, the "Slovak." This daily was the organ of Monsignor Tiso. Joseph Tiso was the first Slovak President. He was the legal President of the Slovak Republic, which came into being on March 14, 1939. The Slovak Republic had diplomatic relations with 27 nations, of them 17 or 18 were on the side of the western allies. Monsignor Tiso was a Christian ruler — after a thousand years, the first Slovak ruler — and I had the opportunity to speak with him practically every week. I recall that on August 20, 1944, I was in Prešov at a meeting called by the Government, by the army, and by the Slovak People's Party. At that time, in eastern Slovakia the situation was very critical and the delegates practically from every village and every town from eastern Slovakia told the Government and government representatives of Bratislava, that something will happen if the Slovak Army and Slovak police do not interfere. Practically the whole of eastern Slovakia was parachuted at this time by the Soviets, the Soviet partisans and Soviet agents. I spoke after this meeting with Dr. Tiso, and again when the putsch was liquidated. Dr. Tiso at this time was ready to resign. He hoped that some Slovak politician would take the Slovak question to the International Tribunal.

Mr. Bonin. Tribunal?

Dr. Paučo. Tribunal, yes, because he would like to change the regime, but to preserve independent Slovakia. That was the goal of Monsignor Dr. Tiso.

Mr. McTigue. What happened to Monsignor Tiso eventually?

Dr. Paučo. Monsignor Tiso was hanged, executed by the Communist national court, April 18, 1947, in Bratislava. Dr.

Tiso was the first among the Catholic prelates in central Europe who were executed by the Communists after World War II.

Mr. McTigue. The usual phony charges, I suppose, were applied, and the usual phony court procedures were set in motion?

Dr. Paučo. Just because he had anti-Communist feelings; I know, not from Dr. Tiso, but from his personal secretary who is living now in Canada, several times Soviet agents were ready to assure to Slovaks and Dr. Tiso himself a separate Slovak-Soviet Republic if Dr. Tiso will go with the Soviets, and Dr. Tiso refused. Tiso said one time, I recall, that if his own brother were a Communist, he would fight him. And I am sure that is why Dr. Tiso was executed by the Communists' so-called national court in April 1947.

Mr. Feighan. When you state that Monsignor Tiso was the first of the clergymen to be executed by the Russian Communists, you mean the first outstanding figure, both in the spiritual and political world?

Dr. Paučo. Yes, sir. That's correct.

Mr. Feighan. That's all.

Mr. Bonin. Well, Mr. Paučo, it is nothing uncommon for a priest or a member of the clergy in central European countries to be in political life; isn't that correct?

Dr. Paučo. Yes, that's right.

Mr. Bonin. And, therefore, they would be permitted to engage in political life . . .

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. But they took a leave of absence from their clerical life; isn't that correct?

Dr. Paučo. No, that was not so in Slovakia. Monsignor Tiso, as President of the Slovak Republic, was the administrator of his own parish in Banovce, and sang Holy Mass there practically every Sunday.

Mr. McTigue. Tell me, Mr. Paučo, how and why did you escape from Slovakia and come to this country?

Dr. Paučo. After what I saw in Vinnitsia, then in Slovakia, and what I heard from many hundreds of escapees from Ukraina, from Poland, from Russia, from Hungary,

from Rumania, from Lithuania, about practices of Soviets, I could not stay in Slovakia, because I hated communism; I hated bolshevism, and I hoped to live in the free Western World. I am happy that I am here in this free and democratic country. I have my relatives over there, and one of my relatives came through the border just several months ago to Austria. He is now in the American Zone, and he writes to me that our people over there behind the Iron Curtain have friends here in the United States, and they are praying every day that the Government of the United States will win the battle against communism. And Slovaks, like Poles, the Ukrainians, the Baltic nations, or Rumania, Hungary, the Czechs, Croatians, Serbians, and so on, they like to be free like you are here in this country; they like to be independent, and, maybe, will sometime be unified in a great European federation like you are here unified in the United States.

Mr. McTigue. When did you say you left Slovakia?

Dr. Paučo. It was in April 1945.

Mr. McTigue. And when did you arrive in this country?

Dr. Paučo. Four years ago, in April 1950.

Mr. McTigue. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Bonin. Mr. Feighan.

Mr. Feighan. Mr. Paučo, we have heard testimony with reference to the Vinnitsia massacres which stated to us that after the Communists were driven out of the Ukraine in 1943 and the Nazis came in, they opened up graves of which there were 38, each of them the same length, and width, and depth, that they contained over 10,000 people — they weren't all Ukrainians; some were Poles and of other nationalities; that the people there were of various status; they were farmers, artisans, workers, and intellectuals, and the testimony that we received also indicated, at least with reference to those particular graves, that they were done by the Soviet Russians during the years 1937 and 1938, but I assume that they did many others besides those.

Dr. Paučo. I spoke to the people of Vinnitsia, these

people, Ukrainians and Poles, were all liquidated by the Soviet agents.

Mr. Feighan. Yes. That is my understanding.

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Feighan. The testimony that we had shows that. I have no further questions

Mr. Bonin. Well, Mr. Paučo, you stated that this alleged uprising in Slovakia was clearly Communist inspired, is that correct.

Mr. Paučo. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. Bonin. They created dissension and they created an atmosphere of revolt within Slovakia?

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. And agents had been sent in there, is that correct, to irritate and agitate this revolt?

Dr. Paučo. That is correct.

Mr. Bonin. And by that means using the Communist technique to wipe out the people that were undesirable to them?

Dr. Paučo. Yes

Mr. Bonin. Of course, we have had testimony where that same identical thing was used in other countries that have come under the domination of the Russians throughout different parts of Eastern Europe, but this is the first time, I believe, that we had testimony that they were actually dropped in by parachute to irritate and agitate and create the trouble.

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. But, in the meantime, they had some agitators in there already; is that correct?

Dr. Paučo. Oh, yes.

Mr. Bonin. And they had leftwingers in there?

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. Who were ready to follow the agents that were dropped in?

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Bonin. In other words, some people in the United States feel that there are not many Communists, but they are always ready, willing when the opportune time comes, to seize that opportunity to overthrow the existing government in any particular place.

Dr. Paučo. That's true.

Mr. Bonin. Now, of course, since you have been in the

United States, you have been trying to bring to the attention of the people of the free world this Communist threat; is that correct? Dr. Paučo. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. Bonin. And in each instance where you have an opportunity, and I understand that you are still a newspaperman and a journalist, you bring these facts to the attention of the people that read your newspaper, the Jednota?

Dr. Paučo. Yes, that's correct

Mr. Bonin. This isn't the first part of Eastern Europe that we have heard of where forty to fifty thousand people have been slaughtered; once again demonstrating that the Communist regime holds power only because it uses force and threats and intimidation to keep the people as helpless as they possibly can.

Dr. Paučo. That is correct.

Mr. Bonin. Well, on behalf of the committee. I wish to thank you for your splendid statement that you have made as a part of this record and for the résumé of your experiences in Czecho-Slovakia and in Slovakia.

Dr. Paučo. Thank you.

Mr. Bonin. Mr. Feighan has another question he would like to ask you, Mr. Paučo.

Mr. Feighan. Do you not feel that it is correct, Mr. Paučo, that the people of Slovakia are imbued with the nationalistic spirit, a love of God and a love of country, and they just seek the right of self-determination as a sovereign nation?

— Dr. Paučo. That is correct, sir.

Mr. Bonin. In other words, they are asking nothing more than some of the principles that have been enunciated through long years, that each people have the right to determine the kind of government they wish to have, the type of leaders they wish to have, and to conduct their lives and their government in their own nationalistic spirit and attitude. The people of Rumania, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and other nations have the same desire to govern themselves; is that correct.

Dr. Paučo. Yes; that is correct.

Mr. Bonin. Well, I wish to thank you very much for your testimony, and we sincerely hope that the opportunity

presents itself to defeat this Communist threat, not only to the European nations, but also to the peoples of the free world. Thank you very much.

Dr. Paučo. Thank you.

Mr. Feighan. Wait a minute, Mr. Paučo.

Dr. Paučo. Yes.

Mr. Feighan. During your experience in Slovakia, did you have an opportunity to witness the manner by which the Russian Communists tried to break up the culture, the language, the customs, and the religion of the Slovak people?

Dr. Paučo. I lived in Bratislava. Bratislava is the capital of Slovakia and is on the west border of Slovakia. The Soviets came from the east. The whole of Slovakia was occupied on April 7 or 8, and I escaped from Bratislava on April 4.

Mr. Feighan. I see.

Dr. Paučo. I wasn't there after the Soviets occupied the whole of Slovakia, but I was in Bratislava during three months that the eastern part of Slovakia was occupied by the Soviets, and I heard from my relatives, from my friends, of the methods which I mentioned before.

Mr. Feighan. Yes; but you were not there yourself to see it and observe it?

Dr. Paučo. No, no.

Mr. Feighan. Well thank you, Mr. Paučo

Dr. Paučo. You are welcome.

Mr. Bonin. Thank you very much.

(Wilkes-Barre, Pa., September 30, 1954).

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF DR. JOSEPH MIKULA

Mr. McTigue. Were you in Slovakia during World War II?

Dr. Mikula. Yes, I was.

Mr. McTigue. Were you a part of the underground movement in Slovakia?

Dr. Mikula. Yes, sir. We started the underground movement at the end of World War II. I was one of those who started it.

Mr. McTigue. When did it start?

Dr. Mikula. It was in 1944.

Mr. McTigue. What caused you and others to form this underground movement?

Dr. Mikula. I will read a short statement in this connection. The inception of the anti-Communist organization is attributable to the intellectuals who foresaw the necessity of taking preventive measures against the imminent danger of communism. They studied communism and decided to combat it, because they had no false illusions of whether or not the Communists would relax their demands after World War II.

The first communistic pressure was expected in the field of religion. Consequently, the preparations were directed for the defense of religious freedom and the preservation of religious life in the event of intensive persecutions.

The second field was the political field. Our calculations at the beginning were wrong. They didn't start at the beginning in religious persecution, but they concentrated all their activities in the political field.

Mr. Kersten. Have you finished with your statement?

Dr. Mikula. No; very briefly about this political field. The most essential elements in the political life of the nation are political parties. The Communists knew it, and acted accordingly. They were very cautious that no party existed which by attracting the sympathy of a majority of the population would endanger the position of the Communist Party.

So, the parties which arose after the war with the permission of the Communists were incapable of effecting strong anti-Communist opposition, because, first, they had no roots, no tradition, among the population.

Second, part of their leaders were either tools of Communists or opportunists who, because of lack of principles and courage, completely submitted to the Communist pressure, and third, through the assistance of the Communist Party, they were shackled — all other parties were shackled by the coordinating committee of all the parties, the so-called National Front. This National Front was nothing else but a machine in the hands of the Communists to control all opposition against the Communist Party.

Mr. McTigue. Were you the recognized leader of the un-

derground in Slovakia? Dr. Mikula I wouldn't say so.

Mr. McTigue. Were you one of the leaders?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Did you arrange to have some of your members sent abroad in order to assist in the underground movement from without?

Dr. Mikula. I think I can state it quite openly. Our program was to prepare things, first, at home, and, second, we had some people out abroad. I mean, out of the country. We send them out of the country and directed the situation, informed them, they informed us. The information we received we directed to proper authorities.

Mr. Kersten. Now, just at this point — we want to make sure that you understand perfectly clearly, Mr. Mikula. We know, of course, that you did operate in the underground in Slovakia, and there are undoubtedly a number of things that you would not wish to speak about specifically and openly. So that any question the counsel or any member here might ask in that regard, you just use your own judgment. We don't want you to disclose publicly anything that would in any way endanger the present situation there, and that is what you have in mind, Mr. Counsel, I am sure.

Mr. McTigue. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Mikula. Yes. I wanted to ask you for this permission.

Mr. McTigue. How long were you a part of the underground in Slovakia?

Dr. Mikula. I was working directly in the field almost five years to the end of 1949. In February 1950 I left for the United States.

Mr. McTigue. And did you emigrate to the United States in 1950?

Dr. Mikula. Yes, I did.

Mr. McTigue. Now, when you left Slovakia in 1949, were you forced to leave your wife behind?

Dr. Mikula. No, I was one of those who was sent abroad when the Communists took over and legal opposition was almost impossible in the country. So, I went out from Slovakia in 1945, and I was working outside of Slovakia. I was working abroad. I have here a little booklet edited by

the Ministry of Interior in Prague; the head of the Ministry of Interior was a well-known Communist by the name of Nosek. It was edited and published by the Ministry of Interior, 5,000 issues were distributed over here. My name is mentioned about 70 or 80 times in this booklet.

Mr. Kersten. Just so we get that clearly, as I understand it, you left Slovakia in 1945.

Dr. Mikula. Yes, I did.

Mr. Kersten. And you were outside the country?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. But while you were outside the country during the following years up until about 1949 or 1950, you were working in this movement, is that correct?

Mr. Mikula. I was in steady contact, and I was one of the leaders outside.

Mr. Kersten. Of the underground freedom movement in Slovakia?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. And this book that you have handed us here is a booklet put out by the Communists in Bratislava?

Dr. Mikula. In Prague. The Ministry of Interior, Czechoslovakia.

Mr. Kersten. Maybe we had better mark this.

Dr. Mikula. The title of the book is "Conspiracy Against the Republic."

Mr. Kersten. Would you mark this "Milwaukee Exhibit 4."

And you have stated that this Milwaukee Exhibit 4 is a Communist publication published in what year?

Dr. Mikula. It was printed November 1947.

Mr. Kersten. And it contains the accounts of operations against the Communist government; is that correct?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. And you are named in here, as you say, 70 or 80 times?

Dr. Mikula. Something like that.

Mr. Kersten. In what capacity?

Dr. Mikula. Sometimes as the leader of the underground, sometimes as an American agent, sometimes . . .

Mr. Kersten. Always in a derogatory sense?

Dr. Mikula. Absolutely.

Mr. Kersten. I notice on the first page of the printing here — one of the first pages — it is actually page 7, but it seems to be the start of the body of the article — I notice a name — Joseph Mikula. Is that you?

Dr. Mikula. That is me.

Mr. Kersten. Then you are named frequently thereafter; is that right?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. Proceed, Mr. Counsel.

Mr. McTigue. I want to ask you two questions. Dr. Mikula. Will you briefly tell us something about the activities of the underground, and secondly, were these activities effective, in your judgment?

Mr. Kersten. Keeping in mind the safety matters that we talked about.

Dr. Mikula. As I mentioned before, the legal resistance or legal opposition against communism was failing. So, the people with anti-Communist tendencies lost faith in their weak and opportunistic party leaders, and consequently, sought other means whereby they might prevent the Communists from accomplishing their plans.

Now, the direct answer to your question, "What were the activities?" First, to do everything that would undermine the Communist Party, and the ends of the Communist Party. We knew that they will try to Sovietize, to take over the country.

So, we published leaflets. We published booklets. We published periodicals. Everything was illegal and underground. That was at the beginning. Later on, when it was pretty hard to distribute mimeographed leaflets or publications — because they were against the Communists — we started an illegal transmitter — a shortwave radio station. It is not necessary to tell where and how it was, but it existed and it worked very effectively. Then, later on, we tried to collect all possible information from political, economical, military, cultural life; get it out and inform the world about the situation over there.

Just to show you how it was done, here are some photostatic copies of the orders issued by the commander in chief of the national security guard. It was a gendarmery police.

Mr. McTigue. Communist police?

Dr. Mikula. Communist, yes.

Mr. McTigue. What did the order say?

Dr. Mikula. They are different orders. For example, I will just speak of the first one. It is dated Bratislava, March 4, 1947, from the headquarters of National Security Guard. The orders to the lower units of National Security Guards:

I order that special attention be paid to the transports of Volhynia Czechs coming from the U. S. S. R. — that is the Soviet Union — they have already settled on the territory of Slovakia. They have to be constantly watched and followed, because they are spreading internationally false information about our eastern ally, the U. S. S. R.

Mr. McTigue. What people is he talking about in this order?

Dr. Mikula. One of the tactics of Communist takeover was transplantation; movements of the people. Right after the war we had a Hungarian minority in Slovakia and a Slovakian minority in Hungary. Now, right after the war started the transportation of these minorities from Hungary to Slovakia, and from Slovakia to Hungary.

What happened to Slovakia? From Hungary came the people who couldn't speak any word of Slovak. To Hungary came people from Slovakia.

There were Czechs who lived about 200 or 300 years in one province of Russia called Volhynia. Just to show good faith or something like that, the Soviet moved those Volhynia Czechs to Czecho-Slovakia.

The movements of the population are very serious things, because they bring insecurity. Nobody knows how long he stays in his own house, in his own neighborhood, and so insecure people are always much easier for the Communists to handle.

Mr. McTigue. That is the group to which he has reference in the order?

Dr. Mikula. That is the explanation. So further:

Specifically, I ask the units of National Security Guard to watch the transports coming in and the transient transports of Volhynia Czechs going through the railroad station.

Those Czechs wouldn't come into any contact with the public. I mean with the population. Then you have here the order to maintain a continuous control on all calls in post offices and telephone-office exchanges. This was done by the police. They control all calls coming in and what was said. If they find something against the regime they act according to regulations.

This here is concerning the control of the population in trains. Everyone — they say here, "Everyone is supposed to have this identification card." So, the units of SNB — lower units — are ordered here to control the population, and if somebody hasn't his identification card, he is supposed to be arrested and brought in for investigation to the nearest police station.

This order concerns the former gendarmes or members of the National Security Guard police who were deported to Russia, were confined there, and later on brought back to Slovakia. Some of them were put in their former positions. They were again reinstated as gendarmes, but the order says:

To the Ministry of Interior came the information that the behavior of these returned former members of gendarme is not satisfactory. They talk very sharply against the Soviets and are doing that even in the company of the other members of the unit.

I order you to follow those members in your districts and remind them that for bad talk about the brother nation, Russia, they can be punished and arrested.

Mr. McTigue. Now, what you have been describing to the committee . . .

Dr. Mikula. These are just the examples of how information was collected and brought out and utilized.

Mr. McTigue. Now, do you know, or can you tell the committee whether there is an underground operating in Slovakia at the present time?

Dr. Mikula. I am positive there is. First, I would just say from the general point of view, so long as the Communists are unable to change human nature, there will be the will to be free. It means there will be the will to resist. That is a general reason

Second, the best proof is that you still read in the papers how much trouble they have in this or that group or with this group, and so on. These are the best documents that the resistance is not only alive, but is active.

Mr. McTigue. Do you feel that the underground is the heart of the resistance, the core of the resistance, in Slovakia today?

Dr. Mikula. I would say so. I would dare say that about 80 or 90 per cent of the population is anti-Communist, but not all of these 80 or 90 per cent are willing to take an active part to fight communism.

Mr. McTigue. Why?

Dr. Mikula. Because of the advances of communism they are very cautious to do nothing which could provoke or call for Communist reprisals. This is one reason.

Second, usually the people working actively and directly are, in my opinion, heroes, and not everyone can be a hero. So, from this group, from this 80 per cent, we can say what is in the underground is the most important and most valuable core of passive and active resistance.

Mr. McTigue. You were in Slovakia at the time of the Communist takeover; is that correct?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Were there wholesale arrests and deportations in Slovakia as there were in the other countries?

Dr. Mikula. Slovakia is a small country of about 3½ million population. So the figures are not so enormous, but in relation, in proportion to the whole population, they are pretty big. They deported in the first month after the occupation of Slovakia about 38,000 people.

Besides this, in the first half year, when they took over, about 133,000 people were put in jails, in camps, and taken out of their normal life.

Mr. McTigue. I have no further questions.

Mr. Kersten. Mr. Bentley?

Mr. Bentley. When did you leave Slovakia?

Dr. Mikula. I left Slovakia in 1945.

Mr. Bentley. That was just the beginning of the anti-Communist resistance then, I presume.

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Bentley. Have you maintained contacts, or how have you gotten your information regarding the activities of the underground since that time?

Dr. Mikula. As I told you, we have steady contact through couriers. I will just mention one thing: In 1945 our couriers brought over my wife with two little children. Mr. Chairman remembers those little children. One was four and one was six.

Mr. Bentley. How long was contact of this kind maintained?

Dr. Mikula. I think that contact is still maintained, but I could talk and testify to the end of 1949.

Mr. Bentley. Until the end of 1949, which was about two years after the coup d'etat in Prague?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Bentley. And since that time, your knowledge has been only from information, not direct; am I correct?

Dr. Mikula. It is secondary. Before I received information directly. I was usually the first who received it. Now I am receiving information, but later.

Mr. Bentley. How does the situation in Slovakia compare with that of other countries in the Soviet satellite, would you say? Is it better or worse?

Dr. Mikula. I think the conditions are generally the same in all the countries. As for the resistance, maybe in Slovakia, the resistance is a little bit stronger and maybe a little bit more successful, because, as you know, Slovakia is a country of farmers, a country of mountaineers, and the people in Slovakia are deeply religious. The hardest thing for the Communists to break are the farmers and besides that, to remove religion from the soul of the people and replace it by Leninism is not so easy. You know that.

Mr. Bentley. So you would say that the conditions are about the same, but the resistance there is a little bit stronger?

Dr. Mikula. Yes. The same. The same concentration camps, labor camps, the same tendency to create Kolkhozes and collective farms, the same tendency to break any possible resistance, and if there isn't any hope, arrest the peo-

ple, send them to uranium mines; the same everywhere, the same procedure.

Mr. Bentley. Am I correct in believing that part of Slovakia has been incorporated in the Soviet Union?

Dr. Mikula. A very small eastern part. About 15 or 18 villages of Slovakia were incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Mr. Bentley. The fact that this resistance does exist or does not exist in Slovakia to the extent you say it does, what, in your opinion, can be done most effectively to enable this resistance to continue and maintain itself. What encouragement or assistance can be given, if any?

Dr. Mikula. I would state it in one way: To increase the hopes of people living over there that sometime there will be a change.

Mr. Bentley. We are talking specifically of Slovakia.

Dr. Mikula. Specifically, for Slovakia, it is absolutely necessary to reassure again and again those people that we are not forgetting them, we are not giving them up, and we have understanding for their specific problems.

Mr. Bentley. Including the right of self-determination?

Dr. Mikula. That is what I wanted to say. We should not stick to the outmoded, outlived structures. They have proved to be unsuccessful, and we should give to the people the right to be free and to have their own government, according to their own choice. That is one of the most important things. Then this point: The people are, I would say, 90 per cent united in Slovakia. Anything which points out that we are forgetting them, we are not understanding them, is cutting off the will to resist.

Mr. Bentley. Thank you very much. That is all, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kersten. Congressman Feighan?

Mr. Feighan. Dr. Mikula, as I understand it, you feel that the people of Slovakia should be given assurances that the free world would support their desire for self national determination of their own identity as a nation if they so desire?

Dr. Mikula. When you are talking generally about the population of Slovakia, that is one of the most important

things that they need; some kind of good will that we have an understanding of their problem.

Mr. Feighan. Then if we would tell the whole world that we stand by the principle upon which our Nation was founded, that is, the right of self-determination, that would be helpful to them. In other words, Mr. Mikula, if the free world should give the Communists a free hand in these captive nations, this would cause those people to lose hope, is that right?

Dr. Mikula. Absolutely. One of the most important things is to show those people that we are really informed about their plight, about the conditions under which they are living, that we have actually access to the most secret communistic conspiracies. We should convey this knowledge to the masses. That is one of the most important things.

Mr. Kersten. Does that help to shake and lessen the Communist power in those countries?

Dr. Mikula. It is cutting off the arrogant communistic self-confidence, and when we take such a cut through the Communist Party, we see there are just a few intellectuals, a group of fanatics, and a great number of opportunists. The greatest part of them are opportunists. Activities must be directed against those opportunists, because they are afraid. They betrayed, first, second, third time. They are ready to betray today and every day.

Mr. Kersten. First of all, let me ask you this: You have gone to Detroit from Milwaukee?

Dr. Mikula. Yes. Milwaukee is my home.

Mr. Kersten. You lived here several years and left for Detroit a short while ago where you now live and work with your family?

Dr. Mikula. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. Dr. Mikula, you have given us a great deal of valuable information, particularly the knowledge that I know you have, of the existence of the underground in Slovakia, resistance, opposition, which our evidence indicates exists in all the other countries likewise to a very great extent.

Mr. Kersten. Thank you, Dr. Mikula, for your appearance here today. — (Milwaukee, Wis., October 22, 1954).

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF PHILIP A. HROBAK

Mr. Kersten. I want to say we are very honored and happy to have you here with us, Mr. Hrobak, as the president of the Slovak League of America.

Mr. Hrobak. And the editor of the Jednota, the official organ of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States and Canada.

Mr. Kersten. I notice through several years of knowledge of your activities that you have keen understanding of what it means for a nation or a country or a people to be occupied by the Communists and some of the ways in which they fight and some of the things that we should do to combat this new kind of enemy.

Mr. McTigue. How many members, Mr. Hrobak, are associated or affiliated with the Slovak League of America?

Mr. Hrobak. The Slovak League of America, about 300,000.

Mr. McTigue. What, briefly, is the Slovak League of America?

Mr. Hrobak. The purposes?

Mr. McTigue. Yes.

Mr. Hrobak. A civic and cultural organization of Americans of Slovak descent. It was organized in Cleveland in 1907.

Mr. McTigue. It is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Hrobak has a statement which he wishes to present to the committee, and if there is no objection, may I suggest that the witness be permitted to proceed with the statement?

Mr. Kersten. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. Hrobak. If you permit me, I would like to first express my deep appreciation to this committee for the opportunity given me to present the Slovak chapter in the dread detail of Communist aggression.

I believe it is for the first time, at least as far as I know, that a real, honest effort is being made to know the background of the many peoples behind the Iron Curtain, nations who always were and still are our friends,

peoples who with all their hearts want to be our friends because to them America has always been a living symbol of freedom and independence, and now is just about their last hope of salvation from Red tyranny. I have the greatest respect for the honorable gentlemen on this committee and its chairman, Charles Kersten. The committee has a difficult task, but it is doing that task admirably well.

Helping the nations behind the Iron Curtain to help liberate themselves from the curse of communism cannot and must not become politically a partisan affair. It is the business, the duty, of every American to take part in it; every American must see it in that perspective, because it is, after all, in the interest of the security of our own America.

I would like to express one point before I read my statement, and that is that the Slovaks have no quarrel with the Czech nation as such. The Czech nation today is in the same Red fix as the Slovak nation.

The Slovaks, however, cannot remain silent about Czech political leaders who were in a very large measure responsible for the present terrible plight of the Czech and Slovak nations over there, and who made it possible for the Communists to seize power in Czecho-Slovakia practically without any trouble.

("How the Communists Seized Power in Slovakia" — the statement by P. A. Hrobak, president of the Slovak League of America and Editor of the "Jednota," official organ of the First Catholic Slovak Union, before the Kersten Committee on Communist Aggression, in the County Court House, Milwaukee, Wis., Friday afternoon, October 22, 1954 — was published in full in the previous issue [September-December 1954] of SLOVAKIA and, hence, is not repeated here.)

Mr. McTigue. I take it from your statement, Mr. Hrobak, that you consider the National Socialistic Party of Czecho-Slovakia as the one which was responsible for the sellout to Moscow; is that correct?

Mr. Hrobak. I do, sir.

Mr. McTigue. Do you consider that the case of Czecho-

Slovakia is a practical or typical example of what happens to a nation that attempts to cooperate or coexist with Communists?

Mr. Hrobak. Definitely.

Mr. McTigue. What do you think of the present Kremlin campaign to sell the nations of the free world on peaceful coexistence?

Mr. Hrobak. That is the Kremlin's way of trying to lull us to sleep; forget our problems, our troubles; forget what communism is, and just let them get strong enough until they can take all of us.

Mr. McTigue. In your opinion, what do you think we can do to keep the hopes of the people of Slovakia alive? How can we most help them at a time like this?

Mr. Hrobak. We must let them know that we are behind them; that we have not forgotten them; that Americans still believe in the principles upon which their country was founded, in the principle of freedom and independence; and let them know that we shall do everything to help them help themselves to overthrow the regime they have.

Mr. McTigue. You agree with Mr. Mikula, who testified here earlier today, that the resistance is still strong among the people of Slovakia?

Mr. Hrobak. It certainly is. We have had contact with the people directly and indirectly right through the war, and we still get letters from people who come from Slovakia today.

Mr. McTigue. You are able to maintain an effective system of communication with the Slovakian people with what is going on over there today; is that correct?

Mr. Hrobak. Indirectly. Certain people get the information from persons in Slovakia and then we get it.

Mr. Kersten. Mr. Bentley?

Mr. Bentley. Mr. Hrobak, I want to go back a little bit before the period of Communist domination of Slovakia and look at the situation there briefly during the Second World War. When Slovakia was an independent republic, what exactly was the relationship at that time between Slovakia and Germany?

Mr. Hrobak. Foreign policy was undoubtedly dictated by Germany, but the domestic policy was not, until the uprising of 1944, when the German Army came in to occupy Slovakia. Then the Slovaks were in for it.

Mr. Bentley. Would you say that the fact, for example, that Slovakia had troops on the Russian front was a voluntary action or was that dictated by Germany?

Mr. Hrobak. I think it was both. I think that the Germans expected it, and the Slovaks, to make it appear that they are really taking the business seriously, sent a token division there. The Slovaks had a way of exchanging men by classes; they never had many men in the field.

Mr. Bentley. Did Slovakia take any action toward the United States at the time or shortly after Pearl Harbor when the Germans declared war?

Mr. Hrobak. No; we tried to ascertain that business. We found out that some person, I believe it was the German radio in Vienna, did make a statement that Slovakia declared war, but as far as we could find out from our own State Department and War Department, there is absolutely no formal declaration of war against the United States.

Mr. Bentley. Never was at any time?

Mr. Hrobak. Never was at any time. We couldn't find that out from our own United States Government because that point interested us very much, and so far there is absolutely no record of it.

Mr. Bentley. Now, you say there was a distinction between the foreign policy of the Slovak Republic which was exercised and the domestic policy. You mean the domestic policy of the Slovak Republic was independent of Germany?

Mr. Hrobak. Yes; just about all independent; I mean, running the country of Slovakia itself.

Mr. Bentley. Was there any form of oppression at that time?

Mr. Hrobak. There was no oppression of religion or any other thing. Some laws were enacted that had to coincide with some of the laws that the Germans had, but outside of that, the economic conditions — even Mr. Šrobár, one of

the most intimate friends of Beneš had to admit after the war, were good.

Mr. Kersten. You say there was no oppression. There was freedom of religion and the other political freedoms that you normally would expect?

Mr. Hrobak. None. Some claim that there was political suppression in Slovakia, but they don't explain the problem correctly. The fact is that the Slovak parties, the two only genuine Slovak parties, are the Hlinka People's Party sometimes called the Catholic Party, and the Razu Slovak National Party, which was considered the Lutheran Party. Now these worked for the same program with one accord.

Mr. Bentley. Following the uprising of August 1944, when the German military came in to put it down, from that time Slovakia lost its independence?

Mr. Hrobak. Yes. The Slovaks got it from both sides. They were murdered by the occupation troops and then by the partisans on the other end.

Mr. Bentley. After the German military occupation did the Tiso government continue in power?

Mr. Hrobak. They continued in power until 1945. Tiso tried to explain away as best he could that it was not a national uprising; that the Slovak Army and the Slovak gendarmerie could take care of the troubles in Slovakia themselves. The Germans finally did not believe the Slovaks after General Otto's military mission was stopped at Turčiansky Svätý Martin. I believe it was on August 25; the group of about 25 or 30 people, women and children included, were taken off the train and put up in barracks for the night. The next morning all were lined up against a wall and mowed down with machine guns by the partisans.

Then there were other murders, sabotage, terrorist activities, which all came too soon, even for Beneš's liberation movement which he had allegedly organized. The leader of that movement was supposed to be General Golián. The uprising was Communist-inspired and did not have popular support.

Mr. Bentley. The Russian military occupation of Slovakia took place about when?

Mr. Hrobak. About Easter Sunday, 1945.

Mr. Bentley. And at that time the Slovak Government escaped to Germany?

Mr. Hrobak. The Slovak Government went to Austria.

Mr. Bentley. And I believe they were finally captured with the American troops?

Mr. Hrobak. They were not captured. They surrendered to General Walker's army at that time. We had a copy of the surrender papers and we gave it to our State Department, and, of course, the Army Department.

Mr. Bentley. And what happened to the members of the Slovak Government?

Mr. Hrobak. Well, unfortunately, even despite all our efforts in America to prevent their being handed over to Beneš and his government in London, unfortunately, I say, our pleas availed us nothing, and Tiso's Slovak Government was given up to Beneš and the Beneš-Gottwald coalition government. Tiso, after being tried by a "people's" court, was hanged on April 18, 1947, while members of the Slovak Government were sentenced to prison.

Mr. Bentley. They were tried as war criminals?

Mr. Hrobak. Yes, "war criminals," according to Prague.

Mr. Bentley. What is the situation in Slovakia today under the Communist government of Prague? Is there any form of committee for Slovakia or is there a completely unified government?

Mr. Hrobak. Prague is still trying to tell us that the Slovaks themselves govern their part of the state and the Czechs govern their part, and so on, but that is not true. The Czech Red centralized government in Prague is running the whole show. Even Slovak Communists are not safe; Clementis is gone, so are others, and the secretary general of the Slovak Communist Party is Karel Bacilek, a Czech.

Mr. Bentley. You say the Communists are trying to appeal to Slovak nationalism somewhat?

Mr. Hrobak. They did. Today it doesn't mean any-

thing. They are done for. In fact, Slovak Reds were for separation in 1926, long before Hlinka's party.

Mr. Bentley. Who?

Mr. Hrobak. The Communists. It is a matter of record. They knew what the people wanted. They figured that there are no people in any country who do not desire to be free and independent and they used that to gain their support. Hlinka's Party fought for autonomy; in the beginning, you know, it wanted to have a federation where Slovakia would simply have states' rights.

The fight was simply for states' rights, as we understand them here in the States. The Slovaks wanted to elect their own governor, their own judges, their school directors, and so on. They were not for separatism until much later.

Mr. Bentley. Mr. Hrobak, you were here, I imagine, when Dr. Mikula was testifying, and he said it was his belief that so far as the people of Slovakia are concerned, what they really wanted was the right to self-determination. Do you concur in that?

Mr. Hrobak. That is correct.

Mr. Bentley. Thank you very much. Your statement and your testimony has contributed to the hearings, I am sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kersten. Mr. Hrobak, I think at this time it is quite clear from the records of recent history that the attempts of the Beneš government to collaborate with and have coexistence with the Soviet Union is a classic case of what it means to make this attempt. I meant merely for that government to put itself in a position to be swallowed up by the Communists.

Mr. Hrobak. That is correct.

Mr. Kersten. It is a classic case in that regard.

Mr. Hrobak. Correct.

Mr. Kersten. And I believe one of the ministers of the Beneš government in London, Dr. Stransky, thought that too.

Mr. Hrobak. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. And that, along with other similar epi-

sodes, certainly proves that there is no such thing as peaceful coexistence with the Communists.

Mr. Hrobak. That is correct.

Mr. Kersten. Well, I want to thank you. The records show if it doesn't already that Congressman Bentley knows a great deal about this situation in Eastern Europe because he was an American diplomat in Hungary for several years, and he knows firsthand some of the real machinations of the Communists when they take over a country.

Mr. Bentley. I was also in Slovakia.

Mr. Kersten. I am sure he has firsthand knowledge of that, too.

Mr. Hrobak. Mr. Chairman, the statement that I have made is based not only on what we have from Slovaks, patriotic Slovaks, but it is also based on the book that the regime put out in 1946, that is by the Lettrich "Democrats" and the Husak Communists; the name of it is "Nad Tatrou sa Blýska" — (Lightning over the Tatras). The book has contributions from both sides, Mr. Lettrich's men and the Husak men. And, of course, on the book that was already introduced, there were only 5,000 of these, The Conspiracy Against the Republic, which was introduced as testimony by Dr. Mikula. That is my copy. Then on a book that was published here in America by the Communists called "Partizani na Slovensku" — (Partisans in Slovakia), published in Chicago. And, I believe, another booklet called "Verní ostali," — (They Remained Faithful). This book dealt with the uprising; it was written by Deso Benau, who was editor of the New Yorkský Deník (The New York Daily), in 1946.

Mr. Benau was editor of that paper from 1942 to 1946 and today is doing an admirable job for the Communists in Bratislava.

In this pamphlet — I will leave you this copy — you can see the organizations that are affiliated with us — The Slovak League of America — and the members they have. — I might add here that our papers were outlawed from Czecho-Slovakia by the Communists on October 10,

1946 — that is this paper, the Jednota. and three other Slovak papers.

Now, as you see here in this particular paper dated December 13, 1944, we didn't wait until 1948 to tell America that Beneš sold out the Czechs and Slovaks to Stalin. The big headline in that December 13, 1944, issue right on the front page reads: "Slovakia sold out by Dr. Edward Beneš."

Mr. McTigue. What is that publication?

Mr. Hrobak. This is the Jednota, the official organ of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States and Canada.

And my statement is further based on the information contained in the booklet "The Rise and Fall of the Democratic Party in Slovakia," which was written by Constantine Čulen, a newspaperman from Slovakia now residing in Canada, and published in Slovak by the Slovak League of America. I have translated it into English and the committee is welcome to it any time.

Mr. Kersten. Thank you, Mr. Hrobak.

(Milwaukee, Wis., October 22, 1954).

STATEMENT BY DR. JOSEPH A. MIKUŠ

From 1944 until my escape from Soviet-dominated Czecho-Slovakia, in March, 1948, I resided in Bratislava. During this period I was three times imprisoned by the National Front Government: in 1945, 1946, and 1947. Now, as a Slovak refugee in the United States, I am glad to have the opportunity of exposing to the Committee on Communist Aggression the tactics which, to my own knowledge and based on my personal experience, were utilized by the Communists in Slovakia to establish themselves first as a political party and finally as a dominant force in that country.

Introduction

Before entering upon a discussion of the subject proper, I would like to outline in general terms what has until now been the main trend in Slovakia's political history.

After losing her political independence in the ninth century, Slovakia existed for a thousand years under foreign domination. Despite this fact, the Slovak nation did not lose its ethnographic and cultural individuality. Within the frame-work of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it was able to survive all the pressure of the Magyar cultural and political centralism which seriously menaced its very national existence in the 19th century. World War I finally provided an opportunity for the Slovaks to rid themselves of the restricting grip of this ancient and obsolete power structure.

On May 30, 1918, at the close of World War I, the Slovak League of America signed together with the organizations of Americans of Czech descent the so-called Pittsburgh Agreement, aimed at creating a dualist federal union of the Czechs and Slovaks which a little later entered the world community of nations under the name of Czecho-Slovakia. Although provisions guaranteeing the preservation of the Slovak national and political individuality were, according to the principle of self-determination, the essential condition of this solution, the Czech political leaders, T. G. Masaryk and E. Beneš, never made any real attempt to fulfill their pledges. Instead of a federal union providing for a reasonable degree of self-government for the Slovaks, and in utter disregard of the political will of the Slovak people, Prague organized a strongly centralized state. On February 29, 1920, the first so-called revolutionary parliament of Czecho-Slovakia, appointed by the Prague revolutionary government, voted for the first Czecho-Slovak Constitution which submerged the Slovak national individuality through the device of a speciously conceived "Czecho-Slovak" nation, wherein the Czechs would always be assured of their majority status and their predominance. Not being a minority group in the sense provided for under international treaties signed after World War I, Slovakia remained without any international protection. Contrary to the famous definition of democracy by Abraham Lincoln, the regime arbitrarily established by Prague in Slovakia could be described not as "... a government of the people, by the people, for the

people," but rather as "the government of the Czech bureaucracy by the concept of the 'Czecho-Slovak' nation foisted upon the Slovak people."

For 20 years Slovakia sought to have the principle of equality between the Czechs and the Slovaks incorporated into the constitution. The Slovak political leaders argued that the Pittsburgh Agreement was of international relevance and that it should be respected by both parties in the very interest of the joint Czecho-Slovak state. Prague, confident of the support implicit in the Little Entente (1920), the Mutual Defense Treaty with France (1924), and, last but not least, the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Aid concluded with the Soviet Union (1935), felt strong enough to refuse any discussion on this point at any time.

The Munich Conference of September 28, 1938, the primary significance of which was the collapse of the Czecho-Slovak system of military alliances, inevitably brought the nationality problem of the heterogeneous Czecho-Slovak State into the foreground. By the policy of E. Beneš, and in accordance with the Vienna arbitration of Von Ribentrop and Ciano on November 2, 1938, Slovakia, lost over 10,000 square kilometers of territory to Hungary; an area which included 853,000 inhabitants. This was a national catastrophe. Having experienced this and other deceptions, and being confronted in March 1939 with the alternative of the partition of her territory among Germany, Hungary, and Poland, or of falling under direct German administration, Slovakia voted on March 14, 1939, through her legitimately constituted Diet in Bratislava, for independence.

During World War II E. Beneš, who had voluntarily resigned his office of President of Czecho-Slovakia, found refuge as a private individual in London. His basic goal was to reestablish Czecho-Slovakia and, in spite of the opposition of the Slovak people, he was able to achieve this goal by relying essentially on the help of the Red army and a group of domestic collaborators. In the main body of my statement I will explain the principal facts of this evo-

lution, but I would first of all like to stress one important point:

All Slovaks in the free world greatly appreciate the fact that the House Committee on Communist Aggression has paid particular attention to the tactics which communism applied in Slovakia. As a matter of fact, these tactics were very different from — for example — those adopted in the Czech area. This fine distinction — an art in which Moscow has always been a master — resulted from the difference of attitude demonstrated toward the Soviet Union by the population of Slovakia at the end of World War II. As is known, during World War II the Czech lands were a German protectorate. At that time and until 1944, Slovakia was a relatively free state, imbued with only one desire: To reaffirm her status as a national state after the end of the war. Whereas the population of Bohemia and Moravia looked forward with high hope to its liberation from German domination by the Soviets, that of Slovakia considered the approach of the Soviet Army as a disaster which would put an end to the Slovak national state.

Because of this difference in psychological attitude, Moscow decided from the outset on a policy of appeasement of the Czechs and on a program designed to smash the resistance of the Slovaks. A detailed plan for this program had been elaborated, with the Kremlin's blessing, by E. Beneš and K. Gottwald, who as early as 1943 were in Moscow.

A. The Blueprint for Sovietization

After the Teheran Conference, which took place November 28 — December 1, 1943, it became clear that the Soviet Union would inevitably play an important role in post-war Europe. This conference gave substantial encouragement to the hopes of the Communists and certain pro-Soviet non-Communists in Slovakia. Immediately thereafter, on December 12, 1943, Dr. Edward Beneš, as chief of the Czecho-Slovak Government-in-exile, signed the Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Aid and Collaboration with Stalin in Moscow. In article 4 of this treaty the two signatories agreed upon close political and economic cooperation. "Taking into consideration their respective peaceful interests,"

says the treaty, "the high contracting parties have decided, after the restoration of peace, to establish a close and friendly collaboration . . ." They will develop to the maximum their economic relations and will grant each other, after the war, all possible economic help."

No such treaty having been signed with the United States, Great Britain, or France, this international agreement predetermined the orientation of Czecho-Slovakia toward Moscow in the post-war European scheme of political relations.

The Beneš-Stalin treaty served as a strong stimulus for those who had been aspiring to political power within the framework of Soviet influence in central Europe. In this category were included, among others, former members of the Slovak Communist Party. In the 1935 elections, this party had gained six seats of the 58 corresponding to Slovakia in the Prague Parliament. Consequently, around 10 per cent of the total population of the country had voted for this party, which the Government of the Slovak Republic had suppressed as a subversive group in 1938.

The non-Communist group, smaller and weaker in its common purpose, was composed mostly of descendants of Czech exiles who in the seventeenth century, at the time of the Counter Reformation, had settled in Slovakia.

Both of these factions, equally willing to back "... the apocalyptical horse from the East" (as communism was perfervidly described by one of the factional leaders, Ľudovít Šensel), met secretly on Christmas Day, 1943, and created a joint revolutionary organization under the name of the Slovak National Council. The goal of this movement, as established under article 2 of the respective secret document, was: "... to take over, at the expedient time, all political, legislative, military, and governmental executive power in Slovakia and to use it according to the will of the people until such time as their freely elected representatives shall themselves be able to take it over."

The basic political tenets of the so-called Christmas Agreement were laid down in another document, the first three articles of which read as follows:

"(1) It is our desire that the Slovaks and the Czechs, as the two most closely related Slav nations, shall unite their destinies in a Czecho-Slovak Republic which will be their common government organized on the principle of equality.

"(2) We desire close collaboration with all Slav states and peoples, particularly with the Soviet Union, in which we see a protecting shield for the free life and welfare of all small nations in general, and of the Slav nations in particular.

"(3) The future Czecho-Slovak Republic shall conduct its foreign policy in the spirit of these principles and should therefore, lean on the Soviet Union."

It is appropriate to mention here that, during his visit to Moscow in December 1943, E. Beneš had in principle agreed with K. Gottwald to set up a Soviet type of internal administration in Czecho-Slovakia after its reestablishment as a dualist union; to eliminate all traditional conservative political parties in the Czech area, as well as in Slovakia; and to establish the regime of a so-called National Front Government. In his Memoirs, published in Prague in 1947, E. Beneš recognized this in the following passage (pp. 408-409):

"Thereafter Gottwald expressed his opinion about the way in which this revolution should be prepared. He stressed the necessity of forming national committees (i.e., Soviets), which would not only constitute the revolutionary cells of insurrection, but would even serve as embryos for the whole revolutionary political administration, I was not opposed" — wrote Beneš — "to this opinion . . ."

"Then Deputy Gottwald," continued Beneš, "went on to consider the question of the structure of political parties after the revolution in Czecho-Slovakia. He was certain of a great revolutionary shift to the left, of a great Socialist majority, and of a great defeat of our block of right-of-center parties as it existed before the war: agrarians, national democrats, and artisans . . . As to the admission of the Agrarian Party, our Communists were not willing to commit themselves in any specific way in De-

cember 1943. For all of us the merciless liquidation of fascism was without any distinction the basic and obvious issue."

In the same discussion, Beneš and Gottwald touched on the problem of the National Front Government: "It will be necessary," wrote Beneš, "for the governmental parties to form a unified national front after the liberation, to form a common revolutionary program, and to pledge themselves to put it jointly into practice. I then expressed my agreement with the plan concerning a national front." (pp. 409-410).

On the basis of these three principles: Sovietization of administrations, elimination of the conservative parties, and organization of the National Front Government as it emerged in 1945, Czecho-Slovakia was inevitably fated to become a "people's" democracy.

What was the practical result for Slovakia of the Beneš-Gottwald agreement? The Communist and the non-Communist pro-Soviet group conspiring against the Slovak Republic, although not representing more than 24 percent of the population, became the future leading force of Slovakia.

B. The August 1944 Insurrection

Since early 1944 the Soviet partisan headquarters in Kiev, with Rudolph Slansky as its main political adviser, had been pouring Red parachutists and Communist agents into the mountains of central Slovakia, far behind the German frontlines. Through contacts with many Communists and non-Communist sympathizers, Slovaks, Czechs, and foreigners in various cities and villages of the country, these agents managed to create a network of informants and future collaborators.

More recent documents reveal that as early as February 7, 1944. Prof. Vladimír Jershov of Russian origin, Gregorij Soloshenko, second lieutenant of the Red army, and William Žingor, a Slovak Communist, came to an agreement in Turčiansky Sv. Martin that "... all future partisan activities in Slovakia would follow instructions

from Moscow.”¹ It was also agreed that Žingor would be the chief of the Slovak partisans, with Soloshenko as his substitute. These self-appointments were later “. . . recognized by partisan headquarters in Kiev, and the Turiec County group was integrated into the general Soviet partisan system. By this act the partisan movement in Turiec assumed the character of a military organization.”²

Moreover, in the summer of 1944 the following Soviet agents were, among many others, active in Slovakia: Ing. Nicolai Avenaria, as liaison officer in Myjava; Juria Nikolaiev, a graduate of the Leningrad Naval Academy, as distributor of arms; Ing. Dimitrij Venerovsky and Ivan Platonovich, active in preparing the partisan organization of Liptov County. In Turiec, which was the center of the Soviet partisan activities, Ivan Stepanovich and Alexander Fjodorovich Krajushkin were actively operating. The real Soviet partisan camp was organized in the Kantorská Valley, near Sklabina. It was commanded by a second lieutenant of the Red Army, Ivan Vysockij. Nikola Surkov, second lieutenant of the Red army, was in command of a similar camp near Priekopa. The most effective of these Soviet agents was Alexei Velichko, captain of the Soviet paratroopers, who, in fact, became the chief of all partisan activity in Central Slovakia. Even General Osmolov was sent to Slovakia for a period of time to assure coordination of the activity of the different groups.

In the meantime, on August 1, 1944, Gen. Bor Komorovski, in command of the Polish underground army, ordered a general insurrection in Warsaw. He did this after hearing an appeal of Radio Moscow encouraging the people of Warsaw to carry out a general uprising. “The hour of action has already arrived,” declared Moscow. Bor Komorovski was consequently firmly convinced that he would receive effective aid from the Red army, which had just reached the gates of the Praga suburb, 10 miles from Warsaw. But the expected help never came. In his telegram of

(1) Contributions to the History of the Slovak National Insurrection (In Slovak), Turčiansky Sv. Martin, 1947, p. 26.

(2) Ibid., p. 29.

August 16, 1944, to Prime Minister Churchill, Stalin dissociated himself from the "Warsaw venture." And so under the very eyes of the Red army, the German units were able to carry out their massacre of those Polish patriots who to Stalin (according to his telegram of August 22, 1944, to Churchill) were but "a group of criminals." On October 2 the uprising collapsed because Stalin was unwilling to help "the Polish reactionaries."

The Warsaw insurrection seemed to have no effect on Slovakia. This was a blow to Soviet expectations. To the U. S. S. R., Slovakia in the summer of 1944 was, from a military viewpoint, an empty territory with a "reactionary government and nationalist populations," with some "deviated Communists" and some opportunistic non-Communist elements looking hopefully to Beneš in London. A civil war in Czecho-Slovakia would have been immensely helpful to the political aims of Moscow. But patriotic Slovaks were too wise to begin an internal struggle. Three weeks had passed since the beginning of the Warsaw uprising, and still no reaction in Slovakia. In order to purge this country of its "reactionary" elements before the impending occupation, Moscow needed German military intervention there. It was up to the Soviet agents to provoke it and their opportunity was not long in arising.

On August 24, 1944, a special German military train stopped in Turčiansky Sv. Martin, some miles from the Soviet partisan headquarters in Sklabina. The chief of the railway station, in collusion with Captain Velichko, refused to let it leave. General Otto, former chief of the German military mission in Rumania and now returning from Bucharest to Berlin with his suite of 28 persons, was then conducted to the military barracks, held a prisoner on instructions from Velichko, and together with all his aides was killed by a unit of revolting soldiers the following day.

Thereupon Hitler, infuriated with a Slovak Government which was "unable to keep order in the hinterland of the German lines," decided to send General Hoeffle into Slovakia with an army of six divisions to annihilate the

partisan movement. It was as a result of this decision that the political and military leaders of the pro-Soviet conspiracy started the uprising which was announced on August 29, by Radio Banská Bystrica. Within two months General Hoeffle crushed this Soviet-inspired venture. Although the political chiefs of the insurrection, such as the "Democrats" Joseph Lettrich, Ján Ursíny, Matej Josko, Martin Kvetko, Samuel Bellus, etc., and the Communists Gustav Husák, Laco Novomeský, Karol Schmidke, etc., were able to escape, its military chiefs, General Viest and General Golian, were not so fortunate. As they were attempting to escape by plane, the latter was burned by their angry and disillusioned soldiers. Both of them were then captured by the Germans and taken to a concentration camp in the Reich from which they were never to return.

While all of this was going on, the Soviet Army was quietly resting on the north side of the Carpathian Mountains where it had been stationed for over four months, tranquilly awaiting the last act in this drama. It is evident that the uprising was only a trap set by the Soviet partisans to ensnare the "... Slovak reactionary and opportunist elements." This purpose of the insurrection was revealed during the trial against Slansky in Prague in 1952. As has already been mentioned, the former secretary general of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia had been the main civil adviser for the 1944 insurrection in Kiev. With respect to this function the state prosecutor questioned him as follows:

Prosecutor: Why did the Anglo-American agent (general) Pika show an interest in placing the partisan units in Slovakia under the command of (General) Golian?

Slansky: He sought to place all partisan units under the command of the reactionary General Golian at Banská Bystrica so as to facilitate Golian's supervision of their activities. Pika tried, in the interest of the imperialists and of the London Government of Dr. Beneš, to reduce the influence of the partisans as far as possible.³

(3) Marcel Péju: Hier et Aujourd'hui: Le sens du procès Slansky II. Les Temps Modernes. Paris, June 1953, p. 2013.

Thus Slansky revealed many years later what the Soviets really thought of the leading non-Communist personalities in the 1944 insurrection in Slovakia.

This event is a great national tragedy. Whereas during the three years of her participation in the struggle against bolshevism, Slovakia lost only 2,500 soldiers on the eastern front, she lost around 30,000 persons in the insurrection in the short space of two months. Unlike the insurrection of Warsaw, that of Banská Bystrica has nothing to do with Slovak patriotism. It is quite clear that Slovak patriots would have never organized an insurrection the purpose of which was to reestablish foreign external and internal control in their country.

C. The "Liberation" of Slovakia

What is known as the liberation of Slovakia by the Soviets is in fact a misnomer and a grave distortion of the historical facts. During World War II, though subject to a certain international supervision by Germany, Slovakia was a relatively free country. During five years, until the insurrection of Banská Bystrica, no one was executed for political reasons. The Slovak Government in Bratislava was able to master all the difficulties of the war period during these years. Then the Red army came.

I waited for the Soviet "liberation" with a family which lived on the outskirts of a small town, S., in western Slovakia. They had a nice, or as the Communists would say, a "bourgeois" home here. On the morning of a day of mid-April 1945, the Soviet Army entered the town. The house in question, which was located on a hill, was then chosen as headquarters for the Soviet commanding general in that sector of the front. During the two days that the general stayed in the house, the conduct of the Russians was exemplary.

After the general and his staff had left, we congratulated ourselves on our not too bad experience with the Soviet Army and prepared to celebrate this event with a good family dinner that evening. At 8 p. m., just as we were sitting down to table, a first lieutenant and a sergeant of

the Red army entered the house. The latter put his gun on the dining-room table and began checking on our identity. Meanwhile the officer began to inspect the house "looking for hidden German spies." In the course of this inspection he found our personal effects in one of the bedrooms and brought them into the dining room. He then proceeded to examine these things in detail and chose for himself whatever happened to please him: A watch, a leather suitcase, etc.

We then saw that a second lieutenant of the Red army had entered the house and began in turn to forage through it. After a while he ordered a young lady to go into the kitchen to give him a glass of water. When these three left, after 9:30 p. m., the lady in question collapsed because she had been violated. After this visit by officers, two other groups of soldiers, many of them drunk, successively entered the house, each one having held us, that is, four men and three ladies, under terror in their own way, until 2:30 a. m.

In the city of Bratislava, which numbered around 200,000 inhabitants, more than 4,000 dishonored women had to go to the hospital for examination.

During the "liberation" of Slovakia by the Soviets, around 20,000 Slovaks, mostly intellectuals, were sent by political commissaries into labor camps of Russia, while various tens of thousands of inhabitants were imprisoned.

D. Political Evolution After 1945

On April 5, 1945, the government of Dr. E. Beneš followed the advancing Red army from Moscow into the east-Slovakian city of Košice and established the Third Czecho-Slovak Republic in the shadow of Soviet bayonets, through the so-called Košice declaration. Thus a foreign government was imposed upon the Slovak people which, except for two small factions of political opportunists, had been loyal to the Slovak State — all of this without any plebiscite. The Communists and pro-Soviet "Democrats", who had already rendered a great service to Moscow in the 1944 uprising, became the executors of the new state will in Slovakia.

According to the Beneš-Gottwald agreement of December 1943 in Moscow, they eliminated from the political life of Slovakia all other former political parties, namely, the Slovak People's Party, the Agrarian Party, the Slovak National Party, and the Artisans Party. These parties had received in the 1935 elections 19 plus 12, plus 1, plus 1, or a total of 33 seats in the Prague Parliament out of the grand total of 58 seats corresponding to Slovakia. Not counting the Magyar and the German minorities which had then elected 11 deputies and did not take part in the uprising, the two pro-Soviet factions corresponded in strength to only 14 deputies of the pre-war Slovak representation in the Prague Parliament, six of them being Communists, four Social Democrats, and four others.

Now, after having assured the monopoly of political representation for themselves, the Communist and pro-Soviet "Democrat" factions agreed upon a spoils system expressed in the form of a 50—50 share in the political affairs of Slovakia. In this way the political influence of the Communists increased, in comparison with the year 1935, from 10 to 50 percent, and that of the pro-Soviet "Democratic" faction from 13 to 50 percent. Although this 50—50 relation between the two factions was corrected by the elections of May 26, 1946, in favor of the "Democrats" who, because of the exclusion of other traditional parties, gained 62 percent of all voters in Slovakia, while the Communists got only 30 percent, the actual influence of the Communist Party did not diminish at all. From the outset the Communists had taken over the Commissariat of Interior, including the Police; of Education; and of Industry, together with other key positions in the administration of Slovakia. They also retained the chairmanship of the Board of Commissioners, i.e., the regional government for Slovakia.

Meanwhile the Sovietization of Czecho-Slovakia was progressing in every field of Government activity: In the field of industry, President Beneš, ever obedient to the Communists, nationalized the main branches of industry by Decrees Nos. 100, 102 and 103 of October 28, 1945, and this without any consultation with the nation — mines,

100 percent; steel industry, 100 percent; sugar production, 80 percent; electricity, 73 percent; chemical industry, 72 percent; metallurgy, 68.5 percent; glass industry, 65 percent; leather, 53.5 percent; gas, 50 percent; textiles, 47 percent; ceramics, 46.5 percent; paper industry, 45.5 percent; distilleries, 31.5 percent; breweries, 27.5 percent; clothing, 25 percent; mills, 14 percent; food, 9 percent; wood industry, 8 percent.

By these acts the number of workers in the nationalized sector became 570,000, whereas only 430,000 working people fell within the field of private industry.

In the field of education all the schools were nationalized by decree of the Slovak National Council (No. 34, dated May 16, 1945). Decree No. 47 of 1945 confiscated the property of private schools, without compensation.

By decree of the Slovak National Council (No. 33 of May 15, 1945) the following institutions of political justice were created: Community and district "people's courts" and a national court in Bratislava. The legal task of these courts was to judge war criminals, but their political purpose was to get rid of the political adversaries of the two factions in power, under the pretext of collaboration with Germany.

The political character of this distorted justice was determined by three circumstances:

1. According to article 42 of Executive Decree No. 55 of the Board of Commissioners, dated June 5, 1945, the members of these courts were to be appointed by the two political parties in power.

2. These courts, disregarding the classical principle *nulla poena, sine lege*, were made component to decide upon cases which were not punishable according to the Penal Code.

3. This legislation introduced the principle of collective guilt and collective responsibility.

4. Article 5 of Decree No. 33 of May 15, 1945, provided for labor camps, which were established through Executive Decree No. 105 of August 23, 1945. According to the provisions of article 2 of this last decree, the following cate-

gories of persons were to be sent to labor camps:

- a. Those sentenced by the "people's courts";
- b. Those whose activities were a threat to "the people's democratic regime," public security, public peace and order, public nutrition and the reconstruction of economic life; or those who were enemies of the state or conspirators against it;
- c. Those who do not work;
- d. Those who declined to do the work assigned to them within the framework of labor duty.

5. No plea was admissible against the act of indictment; the defendant did not have a free choice in selecting his defender; no appeal was granted to a sentenced defendant.

6. Sentences to imprisonment usually involved the confiscation of the defendant's property.

It is appropriate to add here that before being brought to trial the "traitors," "Fascists," "collaborationists," and "unreliable persons" were entirely at the mercy of their indictors. There was no impartial court, as the grand jury in America, to examine into the basis of an accusation. This was an era of arbitrary indictments and personal revenge.

By its decree No. 51 of May 2, 1945, the Slovak National Council dissolved in Slovakia all associations, except for those few which were expressly exempted from this general provision. Freedom of the press, of assembly, and other human rights were likewise abolished.

E. The "Coup de Force" of November 1947 in Slovakia

All these measures were aimed at the weakening of traditional political forces and the establishment of an exclusively Communist power. For a long time the leading personalities of the Slovak Democratic Party, such as Joseph Lettrich, Ján Ursíny, Matej Josko, Martin Kvetko, Stephen Kočvara, etc., did not know whether they should remain loyal to their "gentleman's agreement" of 1945 with the Communists or follow the anti-Communist line of the great majority of the Slovak people. Finally they decided

to remain loyal to their agreements with the Communists. Instead of getting rid of the Communists, as would have been normal for a party which had won 62 percent of all the votes of Slovakia, the "Democrats" did not abandon the principle of the National Front Government. This loyalty was to prove their fatal undoing later on.

In September 1947, under the pretext of having discovered a conspiracy against the government in the Democratic Party, the Communists decided to liquidate this party. Ján Kempný, Miloš Bugár, and Joseph Staško, three deputies of the Catholic wing of this party, were imprisoned, as well as about 2,000 other Slovak patriots. Thereafter the Communists organized demonstrations against "... the reactionaries hidden within the Democratic Party." In this violent dispute between the two political parties in Slovakia, the Czech-Socialist block — i.e., the Communists, the Social Democrats, and the National Socialists of Beneš — representing together 185 deputies (93 plus 37 plus 55) out of the 300 in the Prague Parliament, threw their weight on the side of the Slovak Communists (23 deputies) and against the Democratic Party (43 deputies). The Czech Catholics (44 deputies) remained undecided. There was only one honorable way to prevent the constant intervention of Prague in the internal affairs of Slovakia, namely, to proclaim the independence of Slovakia. Instead of doing that, Joseph Lettrich, chairman of the Slovak Democratic Party, gave his consent to further limitations on the political prerogatives of his own party.

After a visit of Klement Gottwald to Bratislava, the Democratic Party was relegated on November 18, 1947, to a minority status in the regional government of Slovakia. Out of 15 seats there, it retained only 7, while the triumphant Communist bloc got 8: The Communist Party itself (including the chairman), 5; the Freedom Party, 1; the Social Democratic Labor Party, 1; and the last seat fell to General Mikuláš Ferjenčík, "the neutral Commissioner of the Interior," playing in fact into the hands of the Communists. Such a humiliating change would have been impossible without a Czech coup de force in Slovakia.

Having thus eliminated the greatest obstacle from the way of their ambition for exclusive power, the Czech Marxist bloc (including 56 percent of all Czech voters of 1946 and 130 deputies (93 Communists and 37 Social Democrats) out of 231 corresponding to the Czech area) was finally able, on February 25, 1948, to peacefully consolidate its position and, by eliminating the Czech Catholics and National Socialists, to pass over from the principle of the National Front Government to a sheer Communist dictatorship.

Conclusion

As a conclusion to this statement, I wish to repeat that I welcome this opportunity of finally putting the events which took place in Czecho-Slovakia between 1945—1948 in the proper historical light. It is with regret that I must state that neither of the two congressional documents dealing with the Communist subjugation of Czecho-Slovakia — i.e., House Document No. 154, part I, on The Coup de Force in Prague, published in 1949 by the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Document No. 70, part 4, on internal tensions in Czecho-Slovakia, recently published by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate (July 1954), contain appropriate facts and analyses of the acts of Communist aggression committed during that period in Slovakia.

(Washington, D. C., December 3, 1954).

THE TESTIMONY OF FATHER ANTON BOTEK

Mr. Kersten. The hearings will come to order.

Mr. McTigue. Your name is Father Anton Botek, is that correct, Father?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And you were formerly director of Catholic Action in Slovakia, is that correct?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Is it true you were in prison a total number of seven times?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Imprisoned by the Communists?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. From 1945 to 1949?

Father Botek. No, from 1949 till 1950.

Mr. McTigue. When did the Communists occupy Slovakia, Father? Father Botek. In 1944.

Mr. McTigue. Now, Father, tell us something about the fight to keep the Catholic schools open in 1945 and 1946 following the Communist occupation.

Father Botek. As early as 1944, during the 1944 Communist uprising in Slovakia, the so-called Slovakian National Council was concerned with the abolition of all church-operated schools.

Mr. McTigue. Can you tell us something about the tactics of the Communists used to destroy the organizations of the church?

Father Botek. At first they abolished all Catholic Church operated schools; then they disbanded all Catholic associations, and finally they suppressed the Catholic press.

Mr. McTigue. Slovakia is predominantly Catholic in religion, is that right, Father? Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. What are the percentages of Catholics in Slovakia?

Father Botek. Eighty-two percent are Catholic.

Mr. McTigue. Is there anything you can tell us, Father, about the so-called elections in 1946 in Slovakia?

Father Botek. As early as 1944, there were only two political parties admitted; that is, the Communist Party and the so-called Slovakian Democratic Party. The Slovakian Democratic Party denied any political party that would be able to defend their rights by democratic method.

Mr. McTigue. Wasn't there some agreement between the Slovakian bishops and the Democratic Party, Father?

Father Botek. Since there was no political representation of Slovakian Catholics, the Slovakian bishops and clergy tried to find means by which Slovakian Catholics could express their political will. This was necessary especially since the Communists were anxious to win the sympathies of the Slovakian people. The Communists tried to use, especially, the Slovakian Nation's feelings for their

purposes and they suggested to the Slovakian people the creation of an independent Slovakian State after the end of World War II. This, however, wasn't approved by Moscow. Therefore, the Communists tried to achieve a self-rule for Slovakia within the frame of the Czecho-Slovakian Republic and they finally succeeded in it; this was then incorporated into the so-called Košice agreement concluded in 1945.

The Communists also tried to win the sympathy and support of Slovakian Catholics, promising the former members of the Catholic Slovakian People's Party that they wouldn't be punished for their war-time activities if they joined the Communist Party. They also wanted some priests for their policies; for instance, a certain priest, Joseph Straka, who was previously suspended from his office by his bishop because of irregularities in administration. The bishops forbade Catholic priests to make any canvassing prior to the 1946 elections and the Catholic priests were also forbidden to be candidates for any political party in those elections. Father Straka, however, disobeyed this order of the Catholic bishops and made propaganda for the Communist Party in winning Catholics for that party. He promised Slovakian Catholics that the Communist Party would guarantee complete religious freedom to Catholics and he issued also several written statements to the people, one of which I am in position to furnish to this committee. The Slovakian people, however, didn't let themselves be misled by the Communist propaganda and they trusted the bishops because they knew their attitude toward the Communists was the only correct one, since the bishops warned them against the Communists even during the time of World War II. Therefore, we tried to find some cooperation with the Democratic Party of Slovakia, which was not at least Communist, even though this party was also coresponsible for the fact that the Communists were able to penetrate Slovakia. The Catholics were especially indignant against the Democratic Party of Slovakia because they agreed to the confiscation of 1,800 elementary schools and 80 schools of higher grade which were previously operated by the Catholic Church, because this confisca-

tion took place in 1945, at the time when the commissioner for education was the chairman of the Democratic Party, Dr. Joseph Lettrich, The so-called "Democrats," however, became aware of the great pressure, and the great activities developed by the Communists and therefore they also, on their part, tried to win support of the Catholic population of Slovakia for themselves. At that time we Catholics still conducted negotiations with both the Communists and the Democratic Party since we still hoped that we would be able to achieve from the Communists the admission of a Catholic Party to be on the other side.

There were also preparations made for an agreement with the Democratic Party. The Communists, during the negotiations, always applied the tactics of postponement of a final decision. They made indications that they might be inclined to admit, if not an explicitly Catholic party but a party which would at least, to some extent, appeal to the Catholic population of Slovakia. However, it soon became apparent that no agreement could be reached with the Communists. Therefore, on the 30th of March, 1946, we concluded an agreement with the Democratic Party of Slovakia. In this agreement, the Democratic Party of Slovakia pledged itself to admit Catholics as candidates on their list of candidates in the 1946 elections. When the Communists realized this they quickly allowed another party, which was called the Freedom Party and of which they claimed this was a Catholic party. In this party there were several good Catholics, even such persons who previously participated in the negotiations with the Democratic Party, but the chief leaders of that party couldn't be trusted. The Communists also made propaganda or encouraged voters to cast invalid votes because they calculated that Slovaks who disagreed both with the Communist and Democratic Party would prefer to cast invalid votes which then would diminish the percentage of votes received by the Democratic Party. These invalid votes were generally referred to as "white ballots" because they were plain slips of paper. This opportunity to use these white ballots was voted in the Parliament prior to the elections, and the Communists and the representatives of the Free-

dom Party were in favor of this policy. Then it became obvious that the Freedom Party was merely a puppet party under control of the Communists. We therefore started propaganda among the Catholics to vote for the Democratic Party.

We couldn't develop this propaganda publicly, but we requested Slovakian bishops to issue a statement to the Slovakian voters. In this statement of the bishops, Catholics were called upon to vote according to their Christian conscience; they were forbidden to vote for an undemocratic party which would not admit religious freedom and they were called upon to vote for the party which would guarantee democratic freedom. This statement clearly indicated that Slovakian Catholics were forbidden to vote in favor of the Communist Party but it still was necessary to instruct the Slovakian Catholics that it wasn't good for them to vote for the Freedom Party either. Therefore, a statement was included in this appeal by the bishops stating that it was not true; that the rumors were not true which stated that the Slovakian bishops joined the Freedom Party and that they were inclined to vote for that party. Those rumors were spread by the Communist Party and by the Freedom Party. Copies of this proclamation of the bishops were sent to all parish priests; it was also published in the Catholic press and we had couriers taking them personally to each priest. As a result of this campaign, the Democratic Party won in the 1946 elections and received 61½ percent of all votes cast. However, we found out that the Democratic Party didn't defend the interests of the Slovakian Catholics and that this party even failed to defend its own members of Parliament who were Catholics. The Communist-controlled Commission of the Interior in Slovakia had arrested the leaders of the Catholic group within the Parliament who were members of the Democratic Party. In the agreement reached between the Catholic representatives and the representatives of the Democratic Party, the Democratic Party pledged itself, or guaranteed to Catholics that the schools would be returned to the Catholics again and that the press would also be allowed, as well as Catholic organizations. How-

ever, the Democratic Party failed to honor these promises and in arguments with the Communists they always yielded to the Communist demands in order to avoid personal troubles with them. Therefore, Catholics decided to take up direct negotiations with the Government itself in order to defend their rights.

Bishop Jantausch personally called on the chairman of the Board of Commissioners in Slovakia trying to achieve the fulfillment of the promises given by the Democrats and the guarantees for the democratic rights of Catholics. However, he failed to achieve any results. I accompanied him on his visits to the Communist Commissioner Husak, and the Communist Commissioner Viktory, and neither of these two ever agreed to any concessions to the Catholics. Then a commission was introduced which was to find a solution of all problems of the Catholics. In this commission, representatives of the Communist Party were Husak and Novomesky, and the representatives of the Democratic Party were Filo and Frastacky. On the part of the Catholics, the representatives were Bishop Lazik, Canon Cvincek, Carnogursky, and myself. The problems to be solved were the reestablishment of church-operated schools, a free Catholic press, admission of Catholic organizations, discontinuation of inhuman deportations of the Germans and Hungarians from Slovakia, confiscation of property and cancellation of work on Sundays. This commission convened only twice in the winter of 1947, but no results were achieved. In 1945 the Communists abolished the following Catholic organizations: Organization of Catholic women, with a membership of 100,000; the Organization of Catholic Men, with 30,000, and the Association of Catholic Youth, with a membership of 50,000.

Mr. McTigue. In 1948, is it true that the central office of Catholic Action, of which you were director, was liquidated and you were arrested?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. What were you charged with when you were arrested, Father?

Father Botek. The Central Catholic Bureau received

instructions from the Catholic bishops to take over all activities previously carried out by the Catholic Action. However, we were aware of the fact that all organizations didn't have a legal background, a legal footing, and therefore any activities developed by this organization could be stopped by the Communists any time they wanted. The activities of the Central Bureau, the Catholic Action Bureau, were carried on with a great risk. I knew I was constantly shadowed by one or two secret policemen and that officially all persons who entered the offices of our organizations were supervised by the Communists. Instances happened that visitors at our office were then apprehended by these policemen, searched, beaten up, and advised to omit further visits to our bureau. Therefore, we were anxious to keep our activities in the field of the Catholic Action strictly within the limits of religion and not to mix in any political aspects. Nevertheless, the Communists didn't permit our activities and on December 7, 1948, eight Communist policemen invaded our bureau and declared that our organization was disbanded and that the bureau had to be closed down. The employees at the bureau were sent to a room where they were searched while, in the meantime, in the bureau itself, all documents were searched by the Communist police. This search lasted from 8 o'clock in the morning until evening hours, but finally the employees of the bureau were released to their homes, and I was taken by the police to my apartment which also was searched by the police. The office rooms of the bureau were then sealed by the Communist police. The Communists then entered the office rooms of the Catholic bureau twice more and also, I, myself, was twice investigated by the police. Likewise, my assistant at the bureau was investigated by the police.

On the 29th of January 1949, three policemen came to my apartment at 6:30 o'clock in the morning and intended to take me to the police station. At that time I was just saying my daily Mass and I was notified that the policemen were waiting for me. I could escape, but I decided against this, because I suspected that I would discredit, by escaping, the Central Catholic Bureau and also

the Slovakian bishops. I was taken to the police station at Bratislav and held for seven days under very poor conditions. The investigators tried to force me to confess that I had connections with the Western Powers, that I engaged in espionage activities, and that I developed subversive activities against the People's Democratic regime in Czecho-Slovakia. They didn't have any evidence against me and, therefore, they transferred me to the regional court's prison where they held me for another five months pending investigation. At the end of these five months, my former assistant at the Catholic Bureau, as well as the expert for pastoral activities in the border areas, were released and I was put on trial. Since they couldn't produce any evidence in support of the charges that I worked for foreign powers and that I engaged in espionage activities, they forced a student to testify against me, that I knew of his espionage activities and failed to report this to the police. For this offense I was sentenced to seven months' imprisonment. On July 7, 1949, I was transferred to the Leopoldov penitentiary because, at the time the Communists organized their so-called Catholic Action, which was controlled by them, many Catholics who supported the genuine Catholic Action were imprisoned, so that the prisons were crowded. I served the rest of my term at Leopoldov and on the 28th of August 1949 I was released. I was in poor health as a result of my imprisonment and, therefore, I had to go to a hospital, but after a month I myself requested to be assigned to a small parish so as to disappear from the eyes of the Communists.

Mr. McTigue. Was this in 1950, Father?

Father Botek. 1949. While at this small parish, we were preparing an ecclesiastical sermon and at this time a local Communist called on me and requested me, pleaded with me, that I shouldn't launch any attacks against Communists in my sermon, because he stated he was charged with my surveillance and was to report everything on me, including that which I told in my sermons, and he stated he was a Catholic, too, and was the father of eight children he couldn't refuse this Communist order to spy on me and on the other hand, if another person would be given

the same instructions, this other person could do harm to me. When I was approximately two months at this parish, the local chairman of the Communist Party called on me and notified me that I was supposed to report at the district national committee for some discussion. I was afraid, however, that this was just a trick and that people were previously sentenced on charges of underground activities and were sent to forced-labor camps even after they had served their terms imposed by the courts. However, the Communists are very cautious while proceeding against Catholic priests since the parishioners defended their priests against arrest and there were clashes between the population and the Communist police who arrived to arrest Catholic priests, especially at the time when the Communists started their own sponsored Catholic Action. Therefore, they endeavored to lure our parish priests from their parishes and to arrest them at a place where such resistance by local parishioners couldn't be offered. Therefore, I decided not to report at the district national committee and await my arrest at the parish office, and on the same day the police arrived and took me to a forced-labor camp at Novaky

My parishioners protested against my arrest; however, they didn't put up any physical resistance since they already experienced that such resistance was followed by arrests of hundreds of innocent people and that it still was to no avail because the priests were always eventually arrested. I could tell you about conditions there, about my experiences which I had at that time when I was held at the Bratislava County jail. At that time there were members at least of ten underground groups held at that prison. When I had an opportunity to talk to them, I asked how they became involved in underground activities and how it happened that they were arrested since there were always about 50 persons from each group arrested. Most of these former members of the underground groups stated that there was always a Communist spy planted by the Communists within their organizations, and that this Communist spy even encouraged them to develop underground activities which he then reported to the Communist police.

I realized that the Communists had put under surveillance all people whom they suspected might engage in underground activities and if they failed to find anything, any underground activities, they encouraged such people to develop such activities, and before a group could actually start its underground activities, the spy denounced them to the police and the members of the group were arrested. In 1949, the Communists realized that they were unable to win the Catholic bishops for their purposes; therefore, they decided to organize their own Catholic Action. They convened a meeting of the so-called representatives of the Catholic Church in Prague on June 10, 1949. To this meeting they invited several priests under false pretexts, stating that this was to be a conference to negotiate and discuss church problems. In addition, there were also several Catholic laymen invited to this meeting, who were mostly members of the Communist Party but didn't play any decisive role in the Catholic life, and the Communists eventually declared this meeting as the new leadership of the Catholic Action.

The Communists declared that since the Vatican was against the people and since the bishops supported the Vatican in this policy, they intended to leave to the Church only the spiritual care and admit only the kind of questions and morals that the Pope could rule in the affairs concerning the Catholic morals and the Catholic faith; but all other religious questions would be taken care of by this Catholic Action. This evidently was an attempt by the Communists to seize control over the administration of the Catholic Church in Czecho-Slovakia. However, they realized that they didn't have the support of the people. Therefore, they initiated an action of signatures which were to be attached by the entire population of Czecho-Slovakia, to a memorandum issued by the above-mentioned meeting at which this Communist Catholic Action was founded. Branches of the Communist Party organization were entrusted with the carrying out of this signature action. They convened meetings in towns and in villages, and also at workplaces at which the present people were called upon to put their signature on the memorandum. The bishops,

however, condemned this Catholic Action, and the Holy See declared every person who would sign this memorandum as excommunicated from the Catholic Church.

Mr. McTigue. Father, you were in a forced labor camp in 1950; is that correct?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Did you get sick at that time and were you sent to a hospital?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Can you tell us very briefly something about how the Communists treated the Sisters at the hospital?

Father Botek. A Communist order previously arrested all nuns those who were nurses at hospitals because there was a great lack of trained nurses at the hospitals. These nuns, however, who were left as nurses at the hospitals, were exposed to various Communist chicaneries. That was done by Communist functionaries at the hospital, by Communist doctors, and men, and assistants. They were called upon to renounce their membership in their religious orders and to become civilian nurses. The Communists tried to lure the younger nuns with a promise that if they agreed to renounce their membership in the religious order, they would be permitted to go to a university without any previous education, which was otherwise required from university students. This was the same pattern as was applied in the case of young Communist workers who also were admitted to university studies without adequate education and just attend a short preparatory course. Except for a few exceptions, most of these nuns refused the Communist demands and so the Communists started to remove the nun nurses from hospitals.

Mr. McTigue. When did you leave Slovakia, Father?

Father Botek. On the 26th of June 1951.

Mr. McTigue. Did you have any trouble in getting out of Slovakia?

Father Botek. I made a previous attempt to escape. At that time we were a group of 22 escapees. However,

this escape didn't succeed and so I had to try it a second time, at which time we were only four escapees and we succeeded in crossing the border.

Mr. McTigue. Your present assignment at this time is in Rome; is that correct, Father?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. Busby. Father Botek, we know that communism is opposed to all religions, but I think the committee might like to know how successful the Communists were in their efforts to infiltrate and to destroy the Catholic religion in Slovakia.

Father Botek. Previously, when I still was at the Central Catholic Bureau, we intercepted a secret Communist instruction in continuing a Communist plan for destruction of the Church and for its seizure and control. Under these instructions, the individual phases were to be the following: At first the bishops of the Catholic Church in Czecho-Slovakia were to be separated from the Vatican; the second step was to be that the bishops were to be discredited in the eyes of the priests, as well as of the laymen Catholics, and finally, the last phase was to be the separation of the Catholic laymen from their priests.

Mr. Busbey. Now, that leads right up to my question. Up until the time you left Slovakia, and from your own personal observation, how successful was this plan of the Communists?

Father Botek. They succeeded in accomplishing the first objective; that is, to separate the Catholic Church in Czecho-Slovakia from the Vatican. They expelled the Anuncios from the Vatican to Czecho-Slovakia so that contacts of Czecho-Slovakian authorities with the Vatican were interrupted. Nevertheless, the Catholics in Czecho-Slovakia remained faithful to the Vatican, to the Holy See. However, they failed in achieving their second objective. to make the Catholic bishops bend to their demands and to have them — to make them tools in the propagation of communism in Slovakia. Therefore, the Communists placed a commissary to each episcopal office who was to take care that the bishops didn't have any contacts with the

clergy and with the congregation. These Communist commissars controlled the in- and out-going mail; they controlled the visitors who intended to call on the bishops, and admitted only those whom they considered harmless; but even the talks of such visitors with the bishops were monitored.

Mr. Busbey. Father, can you tell us about the methods and technics used by the Communists to indoctrinate the pupils with the theory of Marxism?

Father Botek. The Communists inoculated the Marxist ideology and way of thinking to the pupils from the very first grade of elementary school. When I was in hiding with a family who had an 8-year-old daughter, I overheard her talks with her parents and I heard that this girl was thinking in Communist terms and that her way of thinking was completely influenced by the Communist doctrine.

Mr. Busbey. Father, do you agree with some of the other witnesses we have heard, in the belief that if something isn't done in the immediate future and that if we let the Communists keep on educating the real young boys and girls, it will be more difficult, as time goes on, to defeat this Communist march toward world revolution?

Father Botek. It is a fact that the Communists have had great successes in educating the very young people in their ideology and the parents are almost unable to influence or to counteract against this Communist ideology implanted into the children because these children are instructed to report at school any attempts by their parents to dissuade them from communism. Therefore, it is a fact that if communism is given enough time, that these youths will become completely communistic and the Communist strength will be increased.

Mr. Busbey. Can you give the committee any illustrations of the technics used by the Communists to make the children believe in Stalin before he died, instead of God?

Father Botek. Yes, I saw the magazines for children, for school-children, containing slogans such as "Stalin is our sun; everything we have, we've got from Stalin," and

"Stalin is our benefactor, Stalin is our greatest benefactor, Stalin is the greatest man, Stalin is the most beautiful man."

Mr. Busbey. Father, are you qualified to tell the committee how the Communists exploited the economy of Slovakia?

Father Botek. In these economic aspects, I am not well versed; I only observed that there was a general lack of all consumer goods and that the living conditions were poor.

Mr. Busbey. While you were in prison, were you given any consideration at all because of the fact that you were a member of the clergy?

Father Botek. This probably was the case because I never was maltreated, never was beaten at interrogations, and I observed that many fellow prisoners were beaten, so that I probably enjoyed preferential treatment. This, maybe, was due to the fact that there was still a trace of Catholic faith in my investigators so that they were reluctant to raise their hands against me as a priest. I also had the following experience. While I was in prison, a prison guard came to me and asked me whether he should give his signature to the Communist Action Manifesto.

Mr. Busbey. My final question; do you believe that any agreement made with the Communists is worth the paper it is written on?

Father Botek. From my experience, I had negotiations with the Communists, I can state that the Communists never honor their word that they gave in such negotiations, and this is in accordance with their general policy which goes that everything is good that promotes the Communist cause, and therefore I am convinced that any negotiations or any agreements reached with the Communists are worthless.

Mr. Madden. Father Botek, you in your testimony have covered very well your experiences back over the years with the Communist Party in Slovakia and the only question I would like to ask is what percentage of the population of Slovakia today are Communists, true Communists at heart; what percentage: 5 percent; 10 percent; 20; or what would you say?

Father Botek. I think that the percentage doesn't exceed 10 percent.

Mr. Norblad. Is the Voice of America or Radio Free Europe listened to by many of the people in the area you come from?

Father Botek. While I was in hiding with several families in Slovakia, we frequently listened to the Voice of America and Free Europe programs. However, I heard from these people many objections against the spirit of those programs beamed to Czecho-Slovakia.

Mr. Norblad. What were the objections, generally, in Slovakia? I am referring to the conditions in Slovakia.

Father Botek. The objections were mainly of a national and religious nature. The Slovakian people are a very religious people. They are 82 percent Catholics and 13 percent Protestants, who also are active Protestants. Therefore, programs promoting ideas of a reformer, Jan Huss, or the religious ideas of Masaryk and the other so-called free thinkers, are not appealing to the Slovakian population.

Mr. Norblad. Do they believe the world news, the straight news given on those programs?

Father Botek. Well, the Slovakian people listen eagerly to the news broadcasts by the Voice of America. However, once or twice I witnessed the following incident. Slovakian listeners who listened to the program of the Voice of America, said, after the news was over, just said, "Well, turn it off because the news is over and they are now going to start their propaganda for the Czech Republic and we do not want any Czech Republic."

Mr. Norblad. Do you feel that the radio broadcasts are doing some good behind the Iron Curtain?

Father Botek. They certainly are of great use and great efficiency but this efficiency would still be greater if the rest of the programs, except for the news, was also adjusted to those two major feelings of the Slovakian population, the religious feeling and the national feeling.

Mr. Norblad. Do you get the programs clearly or are they jammed by the Soviets?

Father Botek. The programs are being jammed but on larger radio sets they still can be received and if the transmission is jammed on one wave, on one band of the radio, it may be still tuned in on another one.

Mr. Feighan. There is, is there not, a very strict feeling of healthy nationalism within Slovakia?

Father Botek. Yes.

Mr. Feighan. And that of course is the reason why there has been some resentment to the broadcasts?

Father Botek. Yes. I also heard comments by listeners to the Radio Free Europe and Voice of America programs to the effect that in spite of the fact that there are almost one million Slovak immigrants in the United States, who have their own homes there and national life in the United States, these programs do not bring any reports on the activities developed by these Slovak organizations in the United States; they only bring reports of activities of organizations which are not sympathetic to the Slovak people and, therefore, the Slovakian population, in order to learn of the activities of the Slovak organizations in the United States, tune in on Radio Rome, which also beams Slovakian programs.

Mr. Feighan. Well, it is a pity that the people within Slovakia are not acquainted with the tremendous contribution of the Slovakian immigrants to the culture and civic development of our country. Father, would you relate in a little more detail, if you are familiar with the fact that the Communists in 1948, I believe, offered Slovakia the opportunity to become a Slovak Soviet Republic?

Father Botek. That was actually in 1944 and 1945, not in 1948. At that time this policy was promoted by the Slovakian Communists, Husak and Novomesky. However, Moscow disapproved of this policy and, therefore, the Slovakian Communists had to put up with Czecho-Slovakia, within which Slovakia was to have broad autonomy, self-rule.

Mr. Feighan. Was it not the Slovak Government that refused rather than Moscow's refusing?

Father Botek. Naturally the Slovak Government was

opposed to this idea since it was a Catholic Government.

Mr. Feighan. Well, you've got it both ways; now there is only one way.

Father Botek. I would like to explain this apparent discrepancy. This was due to the fact that there was in 1944, there was a Slovakian Government of an independent Slovakian State which to some extent — whose sovereignty was to some extent restricted by Germans. When the Communists started their uprising, in August 1944, they tried to arouse the sympathies of the Slovak people with promises of an independent Slovakian State but within the framework of the Soviet Socialist Republic. Husak and Novomesky were leading organizers of the uprising in 1944. This policy of the Slovakian Communists, however, was disapproved by Moscow.

Mr. Feighan. Is it not true that because of the spirit of healthy nationalism within Slovakia that the Slovak people would not accept the offer to be a part of the U. S. S. R., because they knew that such a so-called independence of Slovakia would be national in structure only, but in substance it would be socialistic?

Father Botek. This is possible. This is possible, but President Beneš, who was at Moscow at that time, persuaded the Moscow leaders to drop that idea; and he made also great concessions to the Russians so that they considered it more profitable for them to have a Czechoslovak Republic rather than a small Slovakian Republic.

Mr. Feighan. Father, did this Communist Catholic Action still function between that time of its first meeting in June 1949 until you left in June of 1951?

Father Botek. This Communist-sponsored Catholic action proved to be a complete failure. They still held an anniversary meeting the following year but they didn't celebrate the foundation of this Catholic Action in the third year any more.

Mr. Kersten. I hope you understand, Father, that all of our questions are asked in the spirit of inquiry regarding the Communist aggression upon Slovakia. That is our overall purpose, and thank you, Father, for the testimony.

(Munich, Germany, June 26, 1954).

TESTIMONY OF FATHER ŠTEFAN NAHALKA

(The witness was sworn. The same interpreter was utilized as for the previous witness.)

Mr. McTigue. Your name is Father Štefan Nahalka, is that correct? Father Nahalka. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Were you born in Slovakia?

Father Nahalka. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Were you ordained a priest in Slovakia?

Father Nahalka. I studied theology in Rome, so I was ordained in Rome.

Mr. McTigue. And assigned to parish duties in Slovakia, is that correct?

Father Nahalka. Since 1943, I was assigned to duty in Slovakia.

Mr. McTigue. And at one time, Father, you were secretary to Bishop Vojtaššák, is that correct?

Father Nahalka. Yes, I was in that capacity from 1946 to 1949.

Mr. McTigue. Do you recall the uprising, so-called, in Slovakia? Father Nahalka. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. When did the uprising take place?

Father Nahalka. At the place in which I resided, the uprising started on the 26th of August 1944, when this town was occupied by Communist guerillas.

Mr. McTigue. Can you tell us something about what the guerillas did in that town?

Father Nahalka. At that time I was chaplain at the town of Ružomberok and during the first days of the Communist uprising, the rebels forced the population, the men in that town, forcibly to join the rebel army even though they were completely disinterested and even opposed to the uprising. They also committed grave atrocities. In a valley called Podsuchá, they murdered over 80 innocent people and buried them in a mass grave. In a nearby village, the partisans murdered without any connection with the military, a Catholic priest named Martinko. In the Lupča valley, the Communist guerillas tortured to death there a Catholic priest named Šeda; they cut

strips of his skin from his back and finally even cut off his genitals. Since the population was not in favor of the uprising, the rebels used this deceptive propaganda to win the sympathies of the population. To this end they spread the rumors that the president of the Slovakian Republic, Dr. Tiso, was arrested and deported by the Germans and that, therefore, Slovakia should arise.

Mr. McTigue. Father, in 1949, did each bishop have a political commissar assigned to him so that he could watch over the bishop's activities?

Father Nahalka. In 1949, when the negotiations between the Communists and the Slovakian bishops broke down, the Communists placed Communist commissars into every bishop's office and they also placed one commissar into Bishop Vojtaššák's office, who was a young Communist, a former tailor. He was approximately 24 years old at that time, and there was another Communist placed in the main entrance to the bishop's office who checked on all visitors at the bishop's office. The commissar opened the bishop's mail, in- and out-going, and overheard all conversations the bishop had with his visitors and also accompanied him on all his trips. He also seized control over the files of the bishop's office and he took out items from those files.

Mr. McTigue. Were the rooms in the bishop's home, for example, wired?

Father Nahalka. There were no microphones in the rooms of the bishop's office because the commissar was present at all conversations, but I know of a case when the Communists placed microphones in the conference room for the bishop's conferences.

Mr. McTigue. Were you secretary to Bishop Vojtaššák in 1949?

Father Nahalka. Well, I was secretary to Bishop Vojtaššák until January 1949 and afterwards I lived in the vicinity of the bishop's residence, in the priest's seminary.

Mr. McTigue. Were you arrested by the Communists, Father?

Father Nahalka. I was arrested in December 1945 and held in imprisonment until January 1946.

Mr. McTigue. When did you leave Slovakia, Father?
Father Nahalka. In May 1953.

Mr. McTigue. That is a little more than a year ago.
Did you have any difficulty in getting out of Slovakia?

Father Nahalka. Well, the crossing of the border was very difficult. At first we had to wait for 14 days for an opportunity, for a favorable time to cross the border and we had to be very cautious while crossing to a border area in which the border guards are authorized to fire at anybody whom they see, without warning and finally we had to cut through the barbed wire fences directly on the border.

Mr. Madden. Father Nahalka, when Father Botek was testifying, he mentioned something regarding certain broadcasts that were coming over the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe; do you know anything regarding the broadcasts that come over? Do you have any knowledge on that?

Father Nahalka. I was in hiding for two years with the various people from almost all social strata and during this time I had ample opportunity to listen to foreign broadcasts.

Mr. Madden. Could you tell us regarding your knowledge of the broadcasts that come into Slovakia?

Father Nahalka. The people in Slovakia eagerly listen to democratic broadcasts. However, the preferences are different and also the foreign broadcasts are heavily jammed by the Communists. The people in Slovakia listen to news broadcasts in the Slovak language by Radio Free Europe, Voice of America and also BBC in London; however, they disagree on many aspects in the political comments broadcast from these stations. They are opposed to the political part of the program of those broadcasts mainly because they realize that such programs do not state the entire Communist case in Slovakia.

Mr. Madden. You mean anti-Communist?

Father Nahalka. Are not efficient enough to inspire anti-Communist feeling or to keep up the anti-Communist attitude of the population. This opposition to the programs,

the political programs of those stations is due to the fact that they do not appeal to the national and religious feelings of the Slovaks and also from the ideological viewpoint, there are some objections, since they are sometimes very much alike with the Communist propaganda. They tell people who know, in these broadcasts, there are people who formerly collaborated with the Communists and they are now talking about anti-Communists. For instance, the reports of the so-called Slovakian national uprising was a very, very — was a great mistake. At the time when the transmitters were still in operation, people in Slovakia eagerly listened to an illegal transmitter called the White Legion transmitter and the people in Slovakia also frequently listened to the religious programs broadcast by Radio Vatican.

Mr. Madden. Do you think the programs broadcast by the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe do any good — I mean, against the Communists?

Father Nahalka. These broadcasts have their effects in the line of anti-communism, but especially through their news which they broadcast. However, they could be still more efficient if they adjusted their political programs also to the needs and desires of the Slovak population.

(Munich, Germany, June 26, 1954).

THE TESTIMONY OF JÁN DOBROTKA

Mr. McTigue. You are a Slovak, is that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And you were born on October 20, 1913 at Dechtice, Slovakia, is that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. During the Communist occupation of Slovakia you were a master sergeant in the SNB, so-called, which is known as the Bureau of Internal Security, is that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes, sir.

Mr. McTigue. And you were a uniformed master sergeant in the Bureau of Internal Security from 1947 to 1951, is that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. That is right.

Mr. McTigue. Was the Bureau of Internal Security completely controlled by the Communists?

Mr. Dobrotka. As of 1948 it was completely under Communist control.

Mr. McTigue. But you were a member of the Bureau of Internal Security prior to the time that it was under Communist control, isn't that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And you were required to stay on as a member of the Bureau of Internal Security after the Communists got control, is that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. Well, I was automatically taken over.

Mr. McTigue. After the Bureau of Internal Security was taken over by the Communists, did you from time to time receive orders to arrest priests, to make house searches, and so forth and so on?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes, I received such orders.

Mr. McTigue. Were there many of such arrests made?

Mr. Dobrotka. Many wealthy farmers were arrested.

Mr. McTigue. Can you tell us something about the orders that were given to suppress and liquidate the Slovak Democratic Party members and the Slovak League?

Mr. Dobrotka. As of 1948 members of the Democratic Party were removed from all leading positions in the administration. The Slovak League was completely liquidated because the Communists considered this organization a subversive and reactionary organization, because it was supported by the Slovak League of America.

Mr. McTigue. Did you ever receive orders to give close supervision to the activity of certain parish priests in Slovakia?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes; I received such orders.

Mr. McTigue. What kind of orders were they?

Mr. Dobrotka. We received such orders through channels from the government down to our posts and such orders arrived in sealed envelopes and were classified as secret, and we were instructed to open these envelopes only upon special order by telephone.

Mr. McTigue. Who were the men that actually handed

you the orders, were they uniformed Soviet police or were they plain-clothes men?

Mr. Dobrotka. These were members of the uniformed police. They were my immediate superiors and they related these orders to me.

Mr. McTigue. If you were instructed under sealed orders to report on certain priests, what kind of reports did you make?

Mr. Dobrotka. Under these orders we were to supervise the sermons of priests and to report periodically on whether there were any political aspects in those sermons by priests.

Mr. McTigue. Did you ever report, for example, that there was any political significance to what a priest had to say?

Mr. Dobrotka. I know I submitted annual reports to this effect, and I can state approximately 60 to 70 percent of the members of the SNB did not report any priests to their superiors. This was also due to the fact that the priests were aware of the fact that they were supervised by the police and, therefore, they avoided any political speeches within their sermons.

Mr. McTigue. Did the same kind of procedure, that is reporting on their activities, apply to businessmen and peasants and the populace in general?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes; we received such orders to supervise the activities of the entire population, especially to observe whether the former members of the partially liquidated Democratic Party developed any underground activities.

Mr. McTigue. Were many priests arrested and interned at the time you were in the Bureau of Internal Security?

Mr. Dobrotka. From the entire district in which I was active there were approximately three cases of arrests of priests, however, not a single priest was arrested in the area under my jurisdiction.

Mr. McTigue. That is because you kept reporting to your superiors that the priests were only talking to God, is that correct?

Mr. Dobrotka. That is right; there was no reason for their arrest.

Mr. McTigue. When did you manage to escape from Slovakia?

Mr. Dobrotka. On December 3, 1951.

Mr. McTigue. Did you have any trouble in getting out of Slovakia?

Mr. Dobrotka. No; I did not have any trouble in escaping.

Mr. McTigue. You are now a member of the Labor Service unit at Bad Kreuznach?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes, sir.

Mr. Kersten. Any questions?

Mr. Busbey. When did you become a member of the Bureau of Internal Security? Is that the correct name?

Mr. Dobrotka. In 1938. At that time the name of my headquarters was Provincial Command of Gendarmerie, which was under the Minister of Interior.

Mr. Buskey. That was in 1938?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes, in 1938, at which time Slovakia became an independent state.

Mr. Busbey. Were you a member of the Communist Party at that time in 1938?

Mr. Dobrotka. No, sir; at that time members of the gendarmerie were forbidden to become members of any political parties.

Mr. Busbey. In what year was it that you assumed your duties of reporting on priests?

Mr. Dobrotka. That was after February 1948, at the time when the Catholic Action was started.

Mr. Busbey. You were a member of the Communist Party at that time?

Mr. Dobrotka. No, sir.

Mr. Busbey. Were you ever a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. Dobrotka. In March 1948 all members of the SNB in order to protect their own existence were forced to file an application for membership in the Communist Party.

Mr. Busbey. In order to save your life, you had to become a member of the Communist Party at that time?

Interpreter. He became a member in March 1948, but your previous question was whether he was a member in February 1948.

Mr. Busbey. Did you attend church prior to March 1948?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes; I did. I am a practical Catholic and I attended Mass every Sunday.

Mr. Busbey. And how about after March 1948?

Mr. Dobrotka. After March 1948 I continued attending Mass regularly, however, we were aware that from that time on we were under supervision by the Communists, particularly all our contacts with priests, with the local priest, local teacher and local government officer were suspicious, because these persons were considered as reactionary, and our activities and connections with the people were supervised by Communists spies which were set on us by the Communist Party.

Mr. Busbey. Would you agree with me that the greatest bulwark against communism, and the hope of the whole world for eventual elimination of communism and for world peace, is the fact that the people, not only behind the Iron Curtain, but all over the world, will continue to believe in God?

Mr. Dobrotka. This I believe.

Mr. Busbey. In other words, as long as the people have a deep-seated, strong belief in God, we can be sure that we will eventually eradicate communism from the earth?

Mr. Dobrotka. Yes. May this happen as soon as possible.

Mr. Busbey. Thank you. No further questions.

(The witness was excused.)

(Munich, Germany, June 29, 1954).

THE TESTIMONY OF JUR DETVIANSKY

Mr. Detviansky was called and duly sworn and testified through the Slovak interpreter as follows:

Mr. McTigue. Your name is Jur Detviansky?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. And you were born on September 6, 1919,

in Slovakia in the village of Lodomila, is that correct?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. You were a recorder of vital statistics in the town of Detva until August 1950, is that correct?

Mr. Detviansky. That is correct.

Mr. McTigue. This is the time, of course, that Slovakia was under the Communist domination or occupation?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Later you were an administrative officer at Zvolen until September 1951, is that correct?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes, sir.

Mr. McTigue. Were you discharged from this office by the Communists?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes.

Mr. McTigue. Why?

Mr. Detviansky. As a politically unreliable person.

Mr. McTigue. In your position you know something about the quotas which were set for the farmers by the Communists, is that correct?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes.

Mr. Kersten. Will you speak a little louder in Slovak and in English.

Mr. McTigue. How were these quotas set?

Mr. Detviansky. The quotas were established for individual farmers in the presence of a representative of the Communist Party. The principle for this establishment, this prescribing of quotas, was to prescribe those quotas to wealthy farmers in such a manner that nothing would be left for their own needs. This policy was aimed at destroying the independence of farmers and forcing them to join the farmers' cooperative which would make them the farmers dependent on the Communists. To the same end also several other measures were taken by the Communists, such as, for instance, that all labor force was taken away from the farmers and transferred to industrial purposes.

Mr. McTigue. So it was impossible for these farmers, big and small, to meet the quotas imposed by the Communists, is that correct?

Mr. Detviansky. At first the farmers managed to meet the delivery quotas because they helped each other

in tending the soil. But later this task became impossible to fulfill and farmers abandoned their farms and/or were arrested for not fulfilling their delivery quotas.

Mr. McTigue. Can you give any examples which you know of from your own personal knowledge, of how some of the peasants on small farms reacted to the quotas?

Mr. Detviansky. There were several instances, but the most significant of them was that which occurred at Detva-Kostolná. It was on December 5, 1951, when a farmer named Ján Babic from despair because of the hard delivery quotas prescribed to him knifed his three children, 1, 3 and 5 years old. His wife and two older children succeeded in escaping his desperate act. He committed this action of despair because he stated that since they took away from him everything they should take away also his family.

Mr. McTigue. When did you escape to the West?

Mr. Detviansky. In December 1951.

Mr. McTigue. And you are now a captain in one of the Labor Service company units at Kaiserslautern, is that correct?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes.

Mr. Norblad. Is the treatment which you have been receiving here all you expected?

Mr. Detviansky. Well, the treatment I received here meets my expectations, however, I am dissatisfied with the slow progress of the struggle against the Communists and I am impatient to return to my home country.

Mr. Norblad. Many of us are quite dissatisfied with the progress of our fight against communism.

Mr. Kersten. In other words I understand you feel that the men, the young men of Slovakia as well as the people of the other captive nations that are in the free world would like to try to help the people back in those countries and your country to regain their freedom, is that right?

Mr. Detviansky. Yes, sir, the sooner the better.

Mr. Kersten. And you likewise feel that the young man back behind the Iron Curtain, even those under arms,

would if they have the opportunity help get rid of Communists?

Mr. Detviansky. As far as Slovakia is concerned, I can state that since I was previously an active army officer and knew the mentality of the Slovakian soldiers, I can state that 90 percent of the Slovakian young men would use such an opportunity.

Mr. Kersten. Thank you.

The witness was excused.

(Munich, Germany, June 29, 1954).

When the Kersten Committee published its findings, the Beneš Czechs (Socialists), the Slovak renegades — the Lettrich “democrats” — and the Reds began to scream “murder!” That, of course, is quite understandable. For the lack of positive argument, they resort to the smear technique, the usual line of the Reds. “ČAS” (TIME) — the official propaganda sheet of the Lettrich “we-got-62%-of-the-Slovak-vote-in-1946” democrats, who actively collaborated with the Reds and Moscow from 1943 to February 25, 1948 — in its issue of February 1, 1955, attacked the Kersten Committee and the testimony of most of the Slovak witnesses, labeling the report “scandalous.”

It is unfortunate that the Kersten Committee did not call upon the Lettrich “democrats” to testify; the story would have been more complete. At least Dr. Joseph Lettrich, “leader” of the Slovak “democrats,” and Gen. Nicholas Ferjenčík, “non-partisan” head of Lettrich’s gestapo, should have been given the opportunity to confess that the “democrats” did conclude agreements with the Reds in 1943 and 1945 to collaborate closely on all issues. The Kersten Committee did a good job in the time allotted to it. The work initiated should be completed. Above all else, leading Beneš Czechs (Socialists) and Lettrich “democrats” — former members of the Communist-dominated National Front government of Prague — should be given the opportunity to “sing”!

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Ruins of the Spiš Castle from the western side, Spiš County, Slovakia. The fortress, built in the 13th century, was destroyed by fire in 1780.